

# Saipan Tribune

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## 2004 among the hottest years on record

By KEVIN GRAY  
AP WRITER



**BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)**—The year 2004, punctuated by four powerful hurricanes in the Caribbean and deadly typhoons lashing Asia, was the fourth-hottest on record, extending a trend since 1990 that has registered the 10 warmest years, a U.N. weather agency said Wednesday.

The current year was also the most expensive for the insurance industry in coping worldwide with hurricanes, typhoons and other weather-related natural disasters, according to new figures released by U.N. environmental officials.

The release of the report by the World Meteorological Organization was the first since 2004 on Page 12

## LITTERING, ILLEGAL DUMPING CONTINUES

# 'More enforcers needed'

By JOHN RAVELO  
REPORTER

With illegal dumping remaining unchecked, Division of Environmental Quality director John I. Castro Jr. urged other agencies to have certified litter control officers to augment the enforcement of the anti-littering law.

Castro also disclosed that the DEQ is consulting its lawyer over the pos-

sibility of commissioning volunteers to report to the government those indiscriminately throwing their trash on the streets, so that violators could be issued citations.

Castro renewed the call against illegal dumping, which remains rampant despite an aggressive anti-littering campaign by the government.

Some residents had even disposed of their trash at the vicinity of the old Puerto Rico dumpsite, which has been closed to

the public since the reopening of the Marpi landfill early last year.

"What DEQ is going to do is ask the cooperation of the people not to dump there," Castro said. "Keep Saipan beautiful."

The director said his office would conduct an investigation to possibly ascertain the identities of those who dumped their garbage in Puerto Rico.

He also lamented the condition in many public places where the DEQ

installed "no littering" signs, which could be seen filled with trash right at the foot of those signs.

In an interview yesterday, Castro urged other government agencies to help beef up the enforcement of Public Law 6-37, the Commonwealth Litter Control Act of 1989, by having certified litter control officers.

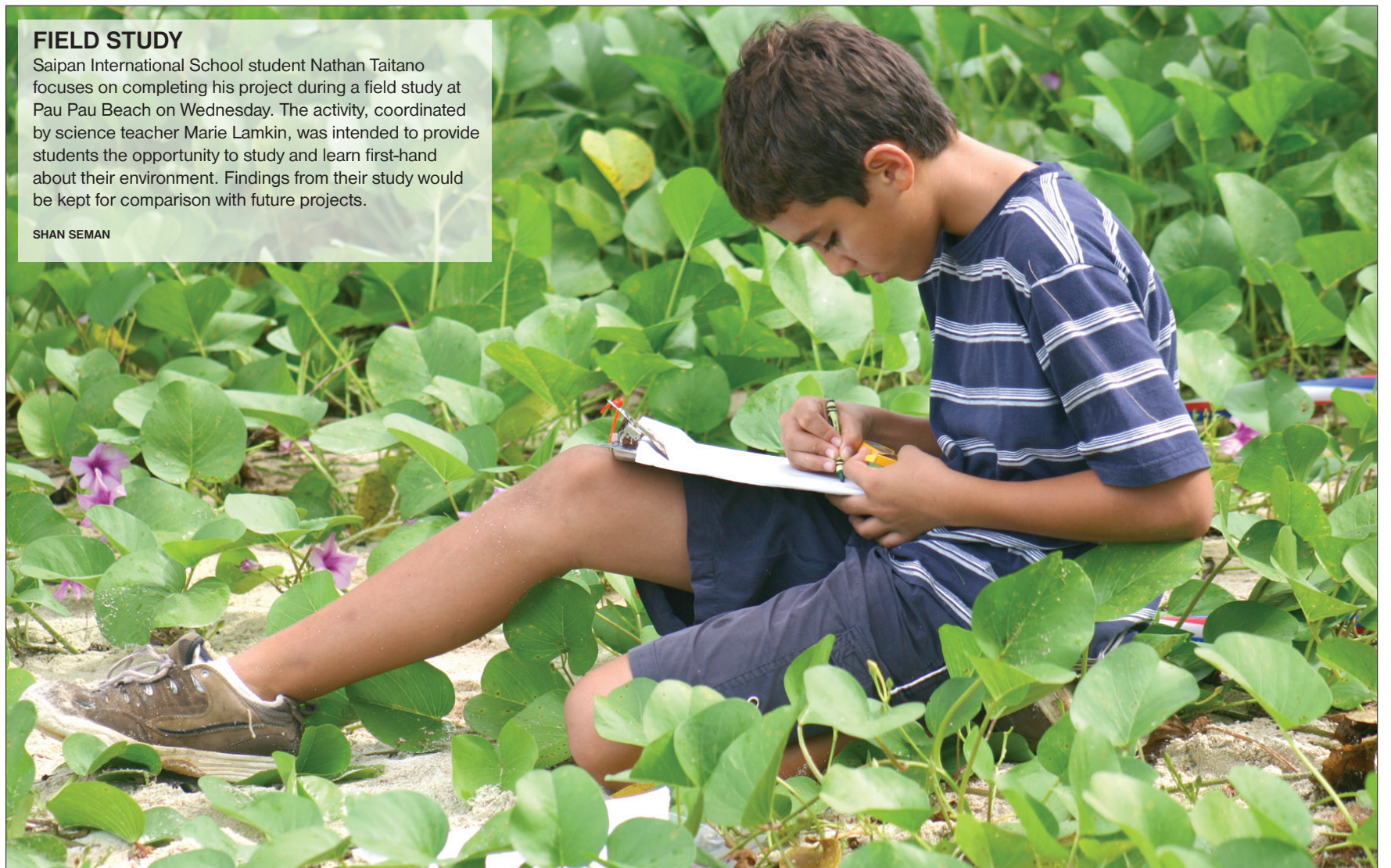
Castro said the DEQ only has a few certified litter control officers that could

See MORE on Page 12

### FIELD STUDY

Saipan International School student Nathan Taitano focuses on completing his project during a field study at Pau Pau Beach on Wednesday. The activity, coordinated by science teacher Marie Lamkin, was intended to provide students the opportunity to study and learn first-hand about their environment. Findings from their study would be kept for comparison with future projects.

SHAN SEMAN



## Dekada lawyer dismisses Cohen statement

By JOHN RAVELO  
REPORTER

The lawyer representing the Dekada movement brushed aside the statement of Interior Deputy Assistant Secretary David Cohen, who earlier

said there is no hope for the group in obtaining U.S. permanent residency status for its members.

"He [Cohen] doesn't have any authority with regards to the immigration policy of the United States," lawyer Stephen Woodruff said. "I never imag-

ined that anyone from Interior could display hostility."

Cohen earlier said that giving Dekada members false hopes of obtaining U.S. permanent residency status—commonly referred to as green card—could make

See DEKADA on Page 12

## Saipan traffic controllers to retain jobs in 2005

By AGNES E. DONATO  
REPORTER

No staffing changes are expected to happen when Airservices Australia takes over the air traffic control tower at the Saipan International Airport on Jan. 1.

Richard Dudley, corporate communication manager for Airservices Australia, said the firm has been contacting all staff across all the locations covered by the company's contract with the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration.

"We are happy to say that almost all

of the existing staff indicated they would like to take up a position with Airservices," Dudley said in an email interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

He added that the company will not be bringing in additional people from

See SAIPAN on Page 12

## Poll registration extended

By MARCONI CALINDAS  
REPORTER

The registration of voters for next year's general election has been extended to Sept. 16, 2005, according to an announcement issued yesterday by the Commonwealth Election Commission.

Despite the increased number of registered voters, the commission estimates that there may still be more

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Local

Six bidders pre-qualify for power privatization

By AGNES E. DONATO  
REPORTER

Six independent power producers have pre-qualified for

the planned privatization of Commonwealth Utilities Corp. power plants 1 and 2 on Saipan. CUC chair Francisco Guerrero said Harris Group, the consulting firm hired by CUC to do the scope of work and evaluation of proposals for the privatization project, is giving the proposers until January to submit their final offer.

“[Harris Group officials] are due to come here soon to update the CUC management about all the inquiries that they received from proposers,” Guerrero said. He said that by late January or early February, Harris is expected to recommend to CUC the independent power producer which the consultants think can best run the power plants. “They will make a final recommendation so CUC can negotiate terms, price, and transfer of the existing power plants,” Guerrero said. Working on behalf of CUC, Harris Group had put out a request for proposals from independent power producers to modernize, upgrade, operate, and transfer Power Plants 1 and 2. CUC has four power plants: two in Lower Base, one in Isley Field, which is not operational; and the Puerto Rico power plant, which is being petitioned by local residents to be relocated due to noise and alleged environmental pollution. The Puerto Rico plant is run by a private group. CUC hired Harris Group at \$103,000. The utility firm earlier said that Harris Group would assist the utility corporation “till the end” to ensure that “we attract the best of the best in global energy producers to partner with our utility, bringing Saipan customers and commercial firms reliable electricity at the cheapest costs.” CUC said that Harris Group’s scope of work involves the current and future energy requirements for Saipan, based on various economic factors or clients and their potential use of electricity.


CD CRUZ CONGRATS

Court sets trial date for Stanley

The Superior Court has scheduled the jury trial of former congressman Stanley Torres, in connection with criminal charges that accuses him of involvement in the alleged hiring of a ghost employee. Associate Judge Juan T. Lizama set the trial to begin on July 5, 2005. The judge also set the pre-trial conference on June 15, 2005, where exchange of witness lists by opposing parties, among others, could be made. “In the event an attorney fails to appear at this conference, the court shall impose penalties, as appropriate,” Lizama said. Torres and co-defendant Dorothy Sablan, who used to be the lawmaker’s office manager, are facing multiple charges of conspiracy to commit theft, See COURT on Page 12

DIABETES  
+GREEN

WILD WEST

The logo for "Island Snapshots" features the words in a stylized, handwritten font. "Island" is in a larger, more decorative script, while "Snapshots" is in a slightly smaller, simpler script. The text is dark, possibly black or dark brown, and has a slight shadow or outline effect.

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed photos of holidays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, location of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). To check if contributions are received, call 223-6287, 223-3446, or 223-8743.

# CUC moves to update wastewater master plan

By AGNES E. DONATO  
REPORTER

Faced with problems involving overflows and drinking water contamination, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has moved to update its over six-year-old wastewater master plan.

The CUC board of directors instructed the management in a meeting Tuesday to contact the Hawaii-based Duenas & Associates and see if the consulting firm would be interested in updating the wastewater plan it did for CUC back in the 1990s.

The CUC board voted unanimously to sole-source the update project, noting that it would be a lot more expensive to bid it out and hire another group to formulate a whole new plan.

CUC chair Francisco Guerrero said the board expects the planned update to cost less than \$100,000. A new study, on the other hand, is estimated to cost over \$300,000, he said.

“The wastewater plan that we have is outdated; it been more than six years since it was made. We need to update it to meet environmental regulations and requirements,” Guerrero said.

He said that the Agingan Point wastewater treatment facility was originally built to take in only about 3 million gallons of wastes a day. However, the increased volume of wastes being discharged by island residents now requires the plant to have a capacity of about 5 million gallons, Guerrero added.

“It’s causing a lot of problem with backflows and contamination of drinking water,” he said.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had earlier cited CUC for the faulty design of the Agingan facility’s existing pipeline.

Aside from the treatment facility problem, the CUC also faces major sewer problems, including recurring overflows in different villages on Saipan.

Based on previous citations by regulatory agencies such as the Division of Environmental Quality and the Coastal Resources Management, the recurring sewer problems are caused by poor system maintenance, possibly a design problem, and lack of facilities.

## Garment firm asks court to junk CRMO citation

A garment firm that was slapped with a hefty fine by the Coastal Resources Management Office filed a lawsuit yesterday, asking the Superior Court to set aside the agency’s decision.

Alternatively, the suit asked the court to remand the matter to the CRM Appeals board.

Hyunjin Saipan, Inc. wants the court to review the agency’s decision to impose a \$10,000 fine against the company.

The CRMO imposed the fine over the company’s renovation of a warehouse into a 10-unit barracks without first securing the necessary permit earlier this year.

CRMO documents showed that the agency had earlier warned the company to stop the construction and file the necessary permit application. The CRMO said Hyunjin ignored its warning.

Hyunjin’s attorney, G. Anthony Long, said the CRMO erred

in allowing the company to be represented by a non-lawyer in an administrative hearing.

In that hearing, the CRMO rejected the company’s defense that it had to expedite renovation work after the company hired some 150 of the garment workers involved in the settled class action.

“CRM did not, at any time, inform or advise Hyunjin that a person not licensed to practice law could not represent Hyunjin in an administrative proceeding before the CRM,” Long said.

Long also said the CRMO failed to properly advise Hyunjin of its appeal rights. The CRMO issued last Oct. 12 an order imposing additional fine of \$2,500 for each day that Hyunjin fails to settle the \$10,000 penalty, causing the amount of the fine to balloon.

The company filed an appeal before the CRM Appeals Board on Oct. 27. On Nov. 16,

however, the agency summarily denied Hyunjin’s appeal, Long said. *(John Ravelo)*

CB CRUZ PROMO

CARS UNLIMITED

MCDO





BOX OFFICE VIDEO

WOMENS CLINIC

ACE HARDWARE

ISLA FINANCIAL  
+GREEN

JUANNYS

NIKKO

# Pete A. calls for local input on water report

Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio has asked CNMI officials to re-evaluate and re-prioritize as necessary the recommendations made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in its Water Infrastructure Study for the three main islands of the CNMI.

This is to ensure that the federal agencies' report to be submitted to Congress in July 2005 will incorporate local water improvement requirements and needs for each municipality, he said.

This comes soon after the U.S. Congress agreed to "federalize" the water problems of the CNMI, recognizing that the available federal entitlements and local funds fall critically short to implement the essential water systems projects for the islands.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study had identified over \$200 million worth of Commonwealth-wide projects needed to improve the quality and quantity of water produced to meet minimum guidelines of drinking water mandated by the CNMI and federal government's Public Drinking Water Standards.

"This commitment by the federal government is unique and presents difficult, time-consuming, but extremely important challenges to our government as well. For the first time in our almost 30 years as a part of the [United States], our historic water systems' problems are finally recognized as a 'federal' problem, and the directive by Congress is meant to fully assist

our government and our people until these essential projects are completed and we have potable drinking water in the homes of all our people," Tenorio said.

In his letter, Tenorio stressed that the role of the local government, including the offices of all elected officials and their respective municipalities, "will be critical in accomplishing the directives of this mandate from Congress. I am writing to you and to all elected officials to invite you to be fully involved and be proactive in the undertaking of this most important endeavor."

Tenorio asked CNMI officials to review the findings of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Final Report and gave them the option of following the COE

recommendations for water improvements as outlined, or to modify the list of recommendations and prioritized projects based on current and critical water needs in each jurisdiction, keeping cost factors in mind.

Upon receipt of the respective reviews, a final report will be prepared and submitted to the Interagency Group on Insular Areas within the next four months to meet the July 31, 2005 deadline set by Congress.

"The ultimate objective of the mandate by Congress is to achieve the goal of providing a water supply to our people that is potable and of sufficient quantity which will meet all standards of public health, appropriate and responsive to the projected growth of our popula-

tion, and conducive to our Commonwealth's short and long term economic development goals and objectives," said Tenorio.

Among the officials Tenorio

wrote to include Gov. Juan N. Babauta, the chairs of the Legislative Delegations, mayors of Rota and Tinian, and municipal council chairs.

WOMENS CLINIC

## D&W donates wheelchairs to CHC

The D&W Group of Companies donated five new adult wheelchairs to the Commonwealth Health Center Wednesday morning.

The new wheelchairs, each costing about \$600, were accepted by Department of Public Health Secretary Dr. James U. Hofschneider and other DPH staff.

G&W executive administrator Enoch Sungsoo Lim said the donation of the wheelchairs serves as a way for D&W to give back to the community.

"We get business because of the community, and we're giving back and sharing what we can," he said. "We donated just five wheelchairs because we're on a tight budget, but hopefully we can give more next year."

Lim said he read a month back that the hospital, especially the hemodialysis section, was in need of wheelchairs, giving them the idea

of donating some.

"We're living in a small community, so we all have to share," he said. "The community helps us, so we help the community in whatever way we can."

D&W human resources manager John DL. Guerrero said the donation was an "early Christmas present" for hospital and community members.

"It's a good present for the hospital and everyone coming to the hospital," he said. "It's needed right now."

Lim, also general manager for sister company Wushin Corp., also disclosed that a \$1,000 donation was contributed to the *man'amko* earlier that morning.

Wushin Corp. operates as a liquid petroleum gas distributor, while D&W operates Shell gas stations including establishments in Puerto Rico, Dandan, Koblerville and the Highway Express and Tires and Lubes in Gualo Rai. *(Shan Seman)*

HARDT EYE

ATHLETES FOOT



# Verizon upgrades DSL

As part of efforts to continue to bring world-class communications to the islands, Verizon will be automatically upgrading the DSL speed of its customers as a free gift for the holidays.

“If you have not signed up for Verizon’s DSL services, then this is the time to enroll. With the newly upgraded speeds, customers can now surf the Internet superhighway in an instant,” the company said in a statement.

With this upgrade, Verizon’s Nitro DSL users will now be experiencing quicker downloads at a rate of up to 512K and uploads of up to 386K. This service is offered at only \$50 per month.

Customers who have signed up with the Supercharged DSL service will also be upgraded and can now download information up to 768K while uploads are up to 512K. Due to the quicker speed, this service will be billed at \$85 per month.

Turbocharged users will be experiencing the fastest speeds as they cruise the Internet at rate of up to 1MG while uploads are up to a rate of 768K. This service is being offered at \$135 per month.

For existing customers, the new speeds will be automatically upgraded into their system. They do not have to fill out any

forms to sign up for this feature. However, new customers must drop by the Verizon customer service center on Middle Road to sign up for the DSL service.

“What makes our DSL service extremely popular to our customers is the convenience of being online at all times. They never have to dial up. They just click on the Internet browser and they can begin surfing the Internet,” said Verizon marketing manager Russ Quinn.

Quinn said many customers are happy about the fact that multiple computers can share the connection. Therefore, customers do not have to have a dedicated port for each computer.

“With the DSL service, the technology allows you to browse the Internet and talk on the same phone line. There is no need for a second line,” he said.

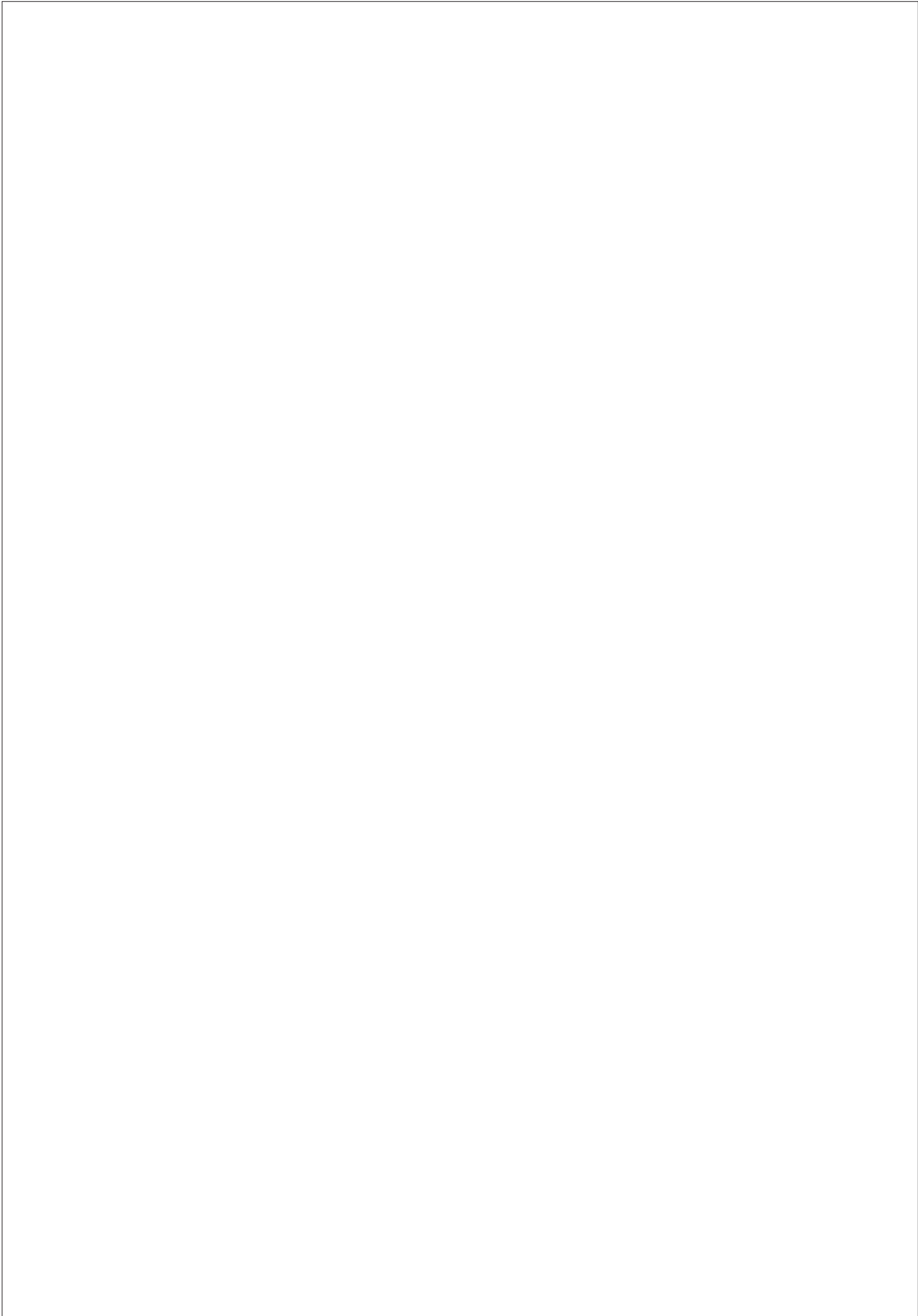
In addition to the faster speed, Verizon will also be waiving the installation fees for DSL service beginning Dec. 10, 2004 until February 2005. “This is another reason why this is the best time to enroll today,” said Quinn.

For more information, call 234-7143. You can also visit the company’s website at [www.vzpacifica.net](http://www.vzpacifica.net). to find out more about Verizon’s products and services.

NIKKO

PANDA STORE





# Opinion

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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

John Pangelinan

PUBLISHER

Jayvee L. Vallejera

EDITOR

MEMBER

Ap

The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

## The price gouging stupor

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Letters to the Editor

Azmar’s worst nightmare



# Shell gas station coming soon to Kagman

By SHAN SEMAN  
REPORTER

D&W Group of Companies recently announced its intention to establish a Shell gas station at the Kagman area.

D&W currently operates Shell stations in Puerto Rico, Dandan, Koblerville, Highway Express and Tire and Lubes in Middle Road Gualo Rai.

According to John DL. Guerrero,

D&W human resources manager, construction of the gas station is expected to begin early next year, and will "hopefully" be completed by summer time.

"Construction normally takes between three to six months," he said during an interview Wednesday. "All we're waiting for is the approval of the permit from the [Division of Environmental Quality]. But that's what we really want...to have a station there for

the Kagman community."

Guerrero, who made the announcement along with D&W executive administrator Enoch Lim, said the planning of the project has been in the works since early this year.

Guerrero said the gas station would prevent Kagman residents from having to travel to other villages "just to fill a gallon of gas" for mowing the lawn or bush cutting.

"This would benefit the people of Kagman," he said. "We measured the distance between the area and the two nearest gas stations, and it's five miles going to the north, and four miles going to the Joeten gas station [in San Vicente]. So this would be convenient for Kagman."

Lim, for his part, said the establishment would also create employment for Kagman residents.

## DEKADA

From Page 1

these people vulnerable to exploitation. He added, though, that he has great sympathy for "hardworking and talented" people who share the American dream.

Dekada leader Bonifacio Sagana said most of the group's members have children who are U.S. citizens and have spent their lives in the Commonwealth for more than 10 years.

Sagana said he does not believe that the members would be exploited, saying that the formation of the Dekada movement was aimed at properly managing funds for lobby efforts that would be facilitated by the group's lawyer.

The group collects \$100 from each member.

At least 3,000 members have completed their registration with the group, Sagana said. These workers have diverse nationalities: Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Thais, and Nepalese, among

others. People who can join Dekada are those aliens who have proof of at least five consecutive years of lawful stay in the Commonwealth.

Woodruff said passing legislation that would grant permanent residency status to Dekada members fall under the province of the U.S. Congress.

Woodruff branded Cohen's statement as "irresponsible," saying that it could have been defamatory had the Interior official named a particular person.

"He's [Cohen] supposed to be ad-

ressing issues of concern here in the CNMI," Woodruff said.

The lawyer said Dekada members deserve to obtain improved long-term residence status, citing their contributions to the CNMI's economy.

Woodruff said that, despite the autonomy of the CNMI in controlling its own immigration, Congress has the power to give them a "special green card."

Woodruff indicated that the group is open to any other means of improving the immigration status of its members.

## SAIPAN

From Page 1

Australia. He said the services to be supplied at Saipan will be managed by Airservices Pacific Inc., a U.S. subsidiary owned by Airservices Australia.

"The board of [API] will bring a wealth of experience from Airservices Australia to our U.S. operations and will provide a channel for us to share our international experiences with our Australian team," Dudley said.

Starting Jan.1, Airservices will replace Serco as the provider of air traffic control services at the Saipan airport. Also covered by the firm's contract with FAA are ATC towers on Guam, and Molkai, Lihue, Kona, and Kalaeloa in Hawaii.

Airservices won the five-year contract, believed to be worth \$15 million, against strong competition, which included six other bidders.

Dudley, however, refused to disclose the actual contract price for Saipan.

"We believe our bid was competitive on price. Our proposal to the FAA provided a strong technical solution which demonstrated our ability to further add to the success of the FAA's Federal Contract Towers program," he said.

Dudley said Airservices is looking forward to Jan. 1, as he cited the extensive preparation currently being done by the company.

"We have a comprehensive phase-in plan which addresses a range of

areas including commercial, human resource, logistics, support services, and of course, operational issues. Managing this plan in a systematic and professional way is a key success factor for us," he said.

One of the steps taken by Airservices is the appointment of a project manager with experience in the U.S. air traffic control environment. This project manager has been in the Western Pacific area since mid-November, Dudley said.

## 2004

From Page 1

cal Organization came as environmental ministers from some 80 countries gathered in Buenos Aires for a United Nations conference on climate change, looking at ways to cut down on greenhouse gases that some say contribute heavily to Earth's warming.

Scientists say a sustained increase in temperature change is likely to continue disrupting the global climate, increasing the intensity of storms, potentially drying up farmlands and raising ocean levels, among other things.

Michel Jarraud, the World Meteorological Organization secretary-general, said the warming and increased storm activity could not be attributed to any particular cause, but was part of a global warming trend that was likely to continue.

Scientists have reported that temperatures across the globe rose an average of 1 degree over the past century with the rate of change since

1976 at roughly three times that over the past 100 years.

The World Meteorological Organization said it expects Earth's average surface temperature to rise 0.8 degrees above the normal 57 degrees Fahrenheit in 2004, adding this year to a recent pattern that included the four warmest years on record, with the hottest being 1998.

The month of October also registered as the warmest October since accurate readings began in 1861, said the agency, which is responsible for assembling data from meteorologists and climatologists worldwide.

During the summer, heat waves in southern Europe pushed temperatures to near-record highs in southern Spain, Portugal and Romania, where thermostats peaked at 104 degrees while the rest of Europe sweltered through above-average temperatures.

The extreme weather of 2004 extended to storms.

The Caribbean had four hurricanes that reached Category 4 or 5 status—those

capable of causing extreme and catastrophic damage. It was only the fourth time in recent history that so many were recorded. The hurricanes of 2004 caused more than \$43 billion in damages in the Caribbean and the United States.

The worst damage was on Haiti, where as many as 1,900 people died from flooding and mudslides caused by Tropical Storm Jeanne in September.

Japan and the Philippines also saw increased extreme tropical weather, with deadly typhoons lashing both islands. Japan registered a record number of typhoons making landfall this year with 10, while back-to-back storms in the Philippines killed at least 740 people in the wettest year for the globe since 2000, the U.N. agency said.

Statistics released at the climate change conference showed that natural disasters across the world in the first 10 months of the year cost the insurance industry just over \$35 billion, up from \$16 billion in 2003.

Munich Re, one of the world's biggest insurance companies, said the

United States tallied the highest losses at more than \$26 billion, while small developing nations such as the Caribbean islands of Grenada and Grand Cayman were also hit hard.

Other parts of the world also witnessed extreme weather, with droughts occurring in the western United States, parts of Africa, Afghanistan, Australia and India. Jarraud, of the U.N. weather agency, said the droughts were part of what appears to be a surge over the last decade.

The prolonged rising temperatures and deadly storms were matched by harsh winters in other regions.

Peru, Chile, and southern Argentina were all hit with severe cold and snow during June and July.

Jarraud said the high temperatures like those seen in parts of Europe this year were expected to inch up in the coming years.

Citing recent studies by European climatologists, Jarraud said heat waves in Europe "could over the next 50 years become four or five times as frequent as they are now."

## COURT

From Page 2

conspiracy to commit theft by deception, and illegal use of public supplies, services, time and personnel.

Torres also faces multiple counts of misconduct in public office, while prosecutors have also charged Sablan with multiple counts of theft, theft by deception and receiving stolen property.

The Attorney General's Office filed

the charges against Torres and Sablan sometime last March.

The court, meanwhile, earlier dismissed the charges against co-defendant Frank Ada, who used to be a legislative staff, without prejudice to the re-filing of the charges.

Deputy attorney general Clyde Lemons Jr. had accused Torres and Sablan of engaging in a fraudulent scheme, wherein the latter received government monies through payroll when she did

not actually perform work.

Sablan allegedly received at least five checks totaling \$5,384.67 in government payroll in 2003, when she was actually off-island. Ada allegedly prepared fraudulent time and attendance sheets indicating that Sablan rendered work when she was off-island.

The judge ordered the parties to exchange witness lists no later than seven days before trial.

"Except for good cause shown, the

parties will be precluded from offering substantive evidence through any person not so listed. The listing of a witness does not commit the listing party to have such person available at trial or to offer the testimony of such person," the judge said.

Lizama also ordered the lawyers to minimize other business or personal commitments during the trial, so it could be expeditiously concluded. (John Ravelo)

## MORE

From Page 1

focus on enforcing the statute. Budgetary constraints limit these officers to work only during normal government work hours.

"It's always good working together with other agencies," he said. "DEQ can't do it alone."

Castro said all litter citations issued during the year came from the DEQ. Other agencies such as the Department of Public Safety, Division of Parks and Recreation, Coastal Resources Management Office, and the Marianas Visitors Authority also have citation ticket forms.

The DEQ has issued at least 21 litter citations this year. Although the number is low, DEQ records show that the figure is the highest annual total since the enactment of the anti-littering law. From 1997 to 2003, litter citations totaled three or less per year, except for 1998, when the total reached almost 10.

The 15-year-old law provides for a penalty from \$200 to \$500 for littering. A violator may also be ordered to pick up trash from a public place under government supervision. "Persons found to have committed the infraction of littering shall be required to pay the costs of removing any litter they caused," it states.

## POLL

From Page 1

than 4,000 qualified individuals in the NMI who need to re-register so they could vote in the general election on Nov. 5, 2005.

Qualified voters are encouraged to register at the commission's office at No. 1313 Anatahan Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan. Registrants may visit the office from Monday to Friday, between 7:30am and 4:30pm. The office will accept registrants even during lunch hours.

As of Nov. 30, 2004, a total of 11,838 voters have registered from a total of six districts. There are 4,589 registrants from Districts 1A to 1E; 788 from District ED No. 2; 2,331 registrants from Districts No.3A to 3C; 1,860 registrants from Districts 4A to 4C; 970 from District ED No. 5; and 1,300 from District ED No. 6.

Eligible voters from Rota who need registration information may contact Miranda V. Manglona or Henry S. Atalig. Tinian residents may reach Matthew C. Masga, Jose P. Kiyoshi or Mary B. Diaz. Residents from the islands north of Saipan may contact directly the mayor's office.

Registration forms are also available via the Internet at [www.votecnmi.gov.mp](http://www.votecnmi.gov.mp). Eligible residents outside the Commonwealth may acquire copies of these registration forms from the website. Eligible voters with disabilities and who may need assistance to register may contact the commission for assistance either in the office or via a home visit.

Those eligible to vote on Nov. 5, 2005 are those who are aged 18 and above, living in the Commonwealth for 120 days prior to election day, not serving a sentence for felony and related conviction, have not been declared judicially insane, and is either a citizen or national of the United States.

The commission also invites registered voters who missed the regular general election in 2001 and 2003 to re-register to be eligible for the 2005 election.

For more information, contact the commission's offices through phone no. 664-VOTE or through electronic mail at [cec@saipan.com](mailto:cec@saipan.com) or [cec@vzpacifica.net](mailto:cec@vzpacifica.net).

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# Verizon to hold last After-Hours Sale of the year

Today, Dec. 17, will be the last After-Hours Sale that Verizon will be holding for the year, according to an announcement issued by the company yesterday.

“If you have not yet completed your Christmas shopping, then come on down to the Verizon customer service center in Chalan Laulau to get the great deals that are happening at Verizon,” the company said.

The LG VX6000 will once again be on special for only \$145.95; conditions apply. For people who are looking for a camera phone as a gift, Verizon said it has the best deal on island for you.

“One of the features that makes our camera phone popular is the fact that you can actually send and receive photos from other Verizon customers. With our system, Verizon customers must type in 670, the cell



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hundreds of customers line up at the Verizon After-Hours Sale on Friday, Nov. 26, 2004 to get some of the coolest phones out on the market. The next After-Hours Sale will be held today, Dec. 17, 2004 from 5:30pm to 9pm at the Verizon Customer Service Center on Middle Road.

phone number, and then complete the address by typing in @pix.vztxt.com. Therefore, if a customer’s number is 287-0000, then you would send the photos to 670287000@pix.vztxt.com,”

said Verizon marketing manager Russ Quinn.

Customers who are ready to turn in their cell phones for the popular Modotell or the Kyocera 2235 can bring in their cell phones and wall charger, whether it is in working condition or not, and get either phone(s) for only \$49.99.

This deal includes a \$10 calling card, a car charger, and a leather case while supplies last.

Customers who wish to purchase the phones without a trade in will be allowed to purchase the phones at the special price of only \$59.99. This deal will also come with a \$10 calling card, a car charger, and a leather case.

Free gifts will be given away with each purchase of a cell phone so come on down today to Verizon in Chalan Laulau between 5:30pm to 9pm to find a deal that is right for you.

## Groups extend appreciation *CHC Volunteers says thanks...*

The CHC Volunteers would like to thank everyone who purchased tickets and all those who helped sell tickets for their tremendous effort to make the group’s Annual Thanksgiving Turkey Raffle one of the most successful ever.

“We would also like to thank the following companies for their annual generous donations toward our turkey raffle: Northwest Airlines; Freedom Air; Pacific Islands Aviation, Rita and Juan Tenorio; Microl Corp.; Triple J Five Star Wholesale; D&Q Saipan; Aqua Resort; Dai-Ichi Hotel; Pacific Islands Club; Coral Ocean Point; Duty Free Shoppers; and Lani Diaz.

“Congratulations to all the winners. All prizes have been claimed and we hope you enjoyed your turkey dinners as well as all the prizes,” the group said in a statement.

## *...as well as CNMI AFWD*

The CNMI Association of Families with Disabilities (CNMI AFWD) wishes to give a deep and profound appreciation to all who supported the dinner fundraiser on Dec. 3, 2004, which helped us build a strong foundation and capacity for people with disabilities and their needs. Your generosity and strong community support will be forever cherished.

JOETEN MOTORS  
+BLUE

GREE



Letters to the Editor

BABY NEWS

Pacific

Six-week occupation ends at Papeete office

**PAPEETE, Tahiti** (Tahiti-*presse*, PIR)—The French Polynesia Land Affairs Office was reopened to the public Monday after being occupied for more than six weeks by demonstrators.

But the government’s computerized data processing office remained closed to the public.

Supporters of the political coalition headed up by former French Polynesia President Oscar Temaru had blocked the Land Affairs Office since Oct. 27. The same supporters continued to occupy the data processing office.

Meanwhile, the French Poly-

nesia presidency also remained occupied by demonstrators, who are calling for dissolution of Tahiti’s parliament and the holding of new parliamentary elections throughout French Polynesia to replace those held on May 23.

The demonstrations were triggered by the ousting of Temaru after a four-month stint as president of French Polynesia by a coalition led by former president Gaston Flosse.

A French court on Friday upheld the contested presidency of Flosse, who was elected back into office after Temaru’s overthrow.

22 Fiji soldiers get jail terms for coup

**SUVA, Fiji** (Fiji*SUN*/PIR)—Twenty-two Fiji soldiers were sentenced to jail terms of three to five years yesterday for their involvement in the march into the Parliament complex during the May 2000 political coup.

The soldiers entered the complex between May 19 and 26 in support of George Speight’s takeover of the Fiji Labor Party-led Government.

In his assessment of the soldiers’ actions, the president of the court martial, Colonel Inia

**NOUMEA, New Caledonia** (Oceania *Flash*/PIR)—New Caledonia’s political leaders and

Kacisolomoni, said the soldiers had been dedicated in the years they had served in the army but their actions had been indicative of their defiance towards their commander-in-chief.

The soldiers were sentenced as follows: Simone Vunitabua—four years; Isireli Cakau – four and a half years; Keni Naika—five years; Peni Naduaniwai—five years; Maciu Tawake—four and half years; Usaia Saukuru—three and a half years; Jitoko Soko—four

officials are concerned at the lack of public housing in the French Pacific territory which, they say, could lead to “grave social problems” within the next ten years.

The assessment came during a so-called “social forum” held this week in the capital Nouméa among political leaders and officials, in a bid to foresee the main future guidelines of New Caledonia’s social policy.

“Within the next ten years, we will have to double or even triple the current number of available social housing units, in order to meet the demand. If we don’t do this, the social consequences will be very serious,”

years; Maetuisela Railumu—four years; Pauliasi Vakacereitai—four years; Kaminieli Vosavere—four and a half years; Filimoni Raivalu—four and a half years; Mataiasi Ului-moala—three years; Malakai Veisamasama—five and a half years; Waqaliva Raiova—three years; Sekove Ratudradra—two and a half years; Isimeli Sovaki—three years; Apete Tamani—two and a half years; Lote Degei—two and a half years; Peni Vulaki—three years;

local official François Xavier Roussel told participants, saying all provinces of New Caledonia were concerned.

Similar conclusions are contained in a report launched this week during the seminar.

New Caledonia’s President Marie-Noëlle Thémereau told participants she intended to improve her government’s social housing, adding this was a matter of “social peace and justice urgency”.

The latest report estimates that in the Greater Nouméa alone, around 20,000 people are waiting for accommodation.

At the current pace, some

Uraia Katonivere—two and a half years; Iliesa Butunaivalu—three years; and Ratumainaceva Vasutoga—three years.

Defense lawyer Vodo Tuberi had requested backdated sentences because of the time his clients had served in remand. He also asked if the soldiers from the engineering department could be suspended instead so they could resume work.

However, the president said the court had no power to back-date the sentences.

500 units classified as social housing are being built each year in New Caledonia.

The report recommends this level to be boosted to one thousand per year, possibly 1,800 (including 1,200 for the greater Nouméa alone).

A local association formed to struggle for the “right to a decent housing” told local media it estimates between 9,000 and 11,000 people currently live in squats around New Caledonia, mostly in the suburbs of the capital Nouméa.

Another issue identified was also the rising pressure on available land and a constant rise in lot prices.

Public housing shortage presses New Caledonia

VERIZON  
CMYK

CUC ROTA

Business

Sprint Nextel would be 3rd largest carrier

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Sprint Corp.'s \$35 billion acquisition of Nextel Communications Inc. could challenge Cingular Wireless and Verizon Wireless for supremacy in a ruthlessly competitive business where prices are constantly dropping.

The combination, if approved, would create a company called Sprint Nextel with 35 million wireless subscribers and a combined \$40 billion in annual revenue, cementing Sprint's spot as the country's third largest wireless business after Cingular and Verizon.

To succeed, the combined company must iron out vast differences in culture and technology. Once that's done, consumers could benefit from

even lower wireless prices, analysts say. The downside: job cuts are likely and Nextel's customer's would eventually have to buy new phones.

The first challenge is that "Nextel's rough-and-tumble roots as an entrepreneurial taxi radio-dispatch business may not jibe with Sprint's button-down persona," CIBC World Markets analyst Timothy Horan wrote in a research note.

No problem, said Timothy Donahue, 55, president and chief executive officer of Nextel, who will be chairman of the combined company.

He said he and Gary D. Forsee, 53, the chairman and chief executive officer of Sprint, who will be the new company's CEO, will work side by side.

"He's a good guy," said Donahue. "I'll also enjoy playing golf with him and having dinner with him."

If the personality differences may be quickly resolved, meshing the two companies' technology will be more complex—and expensive—since their networks and handsets are worlds apart.

More than any other U.S. cell phone company, Sprint has invested heavily in developing multimedia capabilities such as text and photo messaging, even offering a premium TV service that allows customers to watch

everything from baseball games to news on their phones. It has partnered with handset companies including Samsung Corp. that make phones with vast data storage and fast chips.

Nextel phones, by contrast, are relatively low-tech. Produced exclusively by Motorola Inc., they feature a push-to-talk walkie-talkie function popular with landscapers and contractors. The phones run on a different type of network than Sprint's.

Nextel would have had to eventually switch to different frequencies, anyway, so its calls don't interfere with emergency radios. The company had planned to spend \$2 billion to \$3 billion to convert its network; the merger will spare it the cost of making the switch solo.

Eventually, all Nextel customers will have to switch to Sprint's network. They will be able to keep their phones for the time being, but anyone who wants the best of both companies will have to buy a new type of phone that isn't expected to be for sale until the end of 2006.

The phone, to be made only by Motorola initially, will have both companies' signature features: Nextel's push-to-talk function, and Sprint's ability to handle data-rich tasks.



AP  
Louis Lo holds up the Nextel i830, left, and the Samsung Sprint 680 phones at World Communication in San Francisco on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2004.

lottery

shell suds



# Oil futures rise on cold weather

**SINGAPORE** (AP)—Oil futures jumped higher Thursday, after supplies of crude and heating oil in the United States shrank amid rising demand fueled by cold weather spreading across America’s Northeast and Midwest.

Traders said the market was also monitoring last-ditch efforts by beleaguered Russian oil giant Yukos to save its main subsidiary from being auctioned off by Moscow.

Midmorning Thursday in Asia, crude leapt 24 cents to US\$44.43 per barrel in after-hours electronic trade on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

On Wednesday, oil vaulted 5 percent higher to close at US\$44.19 after the midweek

U.S. Department of Energy report showed falls in distillate and crude stocks—exactly a week before the official onset of the Northern Hemisphere winter.

Rising U.S. inventories of crude oil and distillate fuel had been a factor in driving down crude futures by about US\$13 per barrel from the record closing high of US\$55.17 in late October.

Inventories of crude oil in the United States are still 6 percent above year-ago levels even though Washington reported Wednesday that supplies fell by 100,000 barrels last week to 293.8 million barrels.

The nation’s supply of distillate fuel, which includes heating oil and diesel, is 12 percent be-

low year-ago levels, unchanged from a week ago at 119.3 million barrels. High-sulfur distillates typically used for heating oil declined by 100,000 barrels to 49.9 million barrels, or 13 percent lower than a year ago.

“This shock came as the (U.S.) Northeast is being blanketed with cold weather for the first time this winter,” said Energyintel’s Matt Piotrowski in a research note. The weather is “lending significant support to heating oil futures, which have gained 12 percent since last Thursday’s close.”

In Asia Thursday, heating oil rose to US\$1.3966 per gallon (3.8 liters).

Yukos, meanwhile, was trying to block the govern-

ment-run auction of its Yuganskneftegaz subsidiary slated for Sunday. Russian authorities ordered the auction as part of their efforts to claim more than US\$25 billion (euro18.68 billion) in back taxes.

The company, which pumps a fifth of Russia’s oil, filed for bankruptcy in Houston in the U.S. states of Texas on Tuesday. A court will hear the company’s bid for a temporary restraining order to stop the auction later Thursday.

“Our management board concluded that there is absolutely no chance of our obtaining justice in the Russian court system,” Chief Financial Officer Bruce Misamore said in his affidavit submitted to the court.

# Japan manufacturers less upbeat this Dec.

**TOKYO** (AP)—Japanese companies were less upbeat in December than they were three months ago, amid recent data indicating that the world’s second-largest economy may be losing steam, a key government survey showed Wednesday.

In the Bank of Japan’s quarterly survey of companies, the index for large manufacturers for December fell to 22, from 26 for the previous survey in September. The index measures the percentage of companies

saying business conditions are better, minus the percentage saying they’re worse.

It was the first time the figure had fallen since March 2003. However, the index remains at a relatively high level, suggesting that corporate Japan still thinks the economy is on the mend.

The Bank of Japan relies on the poll, known as the “tankan,” for interest-rate policy decisions. Economists and investors look to it as a major benchmark of economic trends.

In the previous poll, the index had surged to 26—the highest level since May 1991, just as the nation’s speculative asset “bubble” burst in the late 1980s.

Overall, the tankan offered mixed signals to economists.

For large non-manufacturers—a segment that includes supermarkets, telecom companies and real estate agents—the index held steady at 11, unchanged from September’s survey. That figure remains at

its highest level since the early 1990s and beat economists’ expectations for a decline.

Big companies also said they plan to boost investment in new equipment for plants and offices by 7.7 percent this fiscal year, ending March 2005.

But the outlook for the months ahead was pessimistic, with large and small manufacturers predicting business conditions would deteriorate before the next survey in March.

# Honda admits cause of potential engine fires

By GREG SCHNEIDER  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Honda Motor Co. has acknowledged a problem with oil filters on CR-V sport-utility vehicles and is taking steps to prevent engine fires caused by oil leaks.

Beginning Friday, the company will mail notices to about 318,000 owners of 2003, 2004 and 2005 model-year CR-Vs, urging those who haven’t yet had initial oil changes to take certain precautions to avoid fires. Honda also has instructed dealers to replace oil filters on all unsold CR-Vs and has made manufacturing changes to prevent future problems.

The federal government is investigating a series of fires on the popular small SUVs that have occurred shortly after owners had the oil changed for the first time. According to Honda, problems arise when service technicians remove the original oil filter and the filter’s rubber gasket or seal remains stuck to the engine block. When a new filter is installed, it can’t fit properly over the old gasket, and oil leaks out onto a hot manifold, causing fire.

Honda has identified 72 such fires in the past year,

many occurring just a few miles from the shop or dealership that performed the initial oil change. No injuries have been reported, but many fires destroyed the vehicles. Many other cases of massive oil leaks caused smoke but were discovered before fire started.

Why the gaskets stick has been a mystery, and dealers have complained that Honda was trying to make them the scapegoats for a manufacturing or design problem. Thursday a spokesman for Honda said the company believes it has figured out the root cause.

“It’s due to a series of somewhat unusual circumstances that relate to the manufacture of the seal,” Honda spokesman Andy Boyd said. Two oil-filter suppliers, one in Japan and one in China, changed the formulation of materials used in the seal or gasket for the 2003 model year, Boyd said. After the filters were installed in the Japanese and British factories that build the CR-V, zinc in the rubber gaskets reacted with temperature and humidity changes as the vehicles were shipped across the ocean to the United States, “blooming” or rising to the surface and causing the material to become sticky, he said.

SHELL VISOR

# Japan corporations lag in promoting women

**TOKYO (AP)**—When Ginko Sato landed her first job in the 1950s, the only person who genuinely welcomed her was the other woman in her office, a secretary who was relieved she would have help serving tea to colleagues and guests.

Sato has come a long way since then—she’s now on the board of directors at Hitachi Ltd., one of Japan’s top electronics manufacturers. But few other women in Japanese society have advanced as far. Sato is one of just two female board members at the 27 Japanese companies that are members of Fortune’s Global 200 list.

Sato blames old-style thinking that she says remains entrenched in the corporate culture of the world’s second-largest economy.

“People in management positions are all middle-aged men who can’t get beyond their old-fashioned thinking,” said Sato, a soft-spoken 70-year-old. “They don’t want to use women who, they fear, will get dragged down by family commitments. Given equal ability, they’d rather go with a man.”

The life stories of Sato and Sakie T. Fukushima, a board member at electronics and entertainment giant Sony Corp., underscore how difficult it has been for women to advance at Japanese companies and how only a select few, with outstand-

ing education, talent and drive, can hope for success.

A survey released in October by Corporate Women Directors International, a U.S. nonprofit organization that promotes the participation of women on global boards, found Japan ranked at the bottom of the list among nations with female board representation at Fortune Global 200 companies.

The survey mentioned a third woman board member at Nippon Life Insurance Co. But Shigemi Kanamori, whose name sounds female, turned out to be a man. That translates to less than 1 percent representation.

The United States led the list with 17.5 percent of board seats held by women. All 78 U.S. companies in the Global 200 have at least one female board member, led by grocery store chain Albertson’s Inc. with 50 percent female representation.

But even after reaching the pinnacle of business power, woman board members still face inequalities in Japan.

Both Fukushima and Sato, for example, are external board members. That would be a plus in the United States and many countries, where independent non-executive directors are

the norm. But it’s a minus in countries such as Japan where “inside” directors, or senior management that rose up within the ranks of the company, wield far more power, according to the Corporate Women Directors International survey.

For the most part, Japanese women executives tend to have started their own companies or are restricted to lesser companies, including retailers, cosmetics and food companies and other services—at least for now.

Job-hopping, which could have been a boon for ambitious women, is still relatively rare at Japan’s major companies, where employees are

groomed over decades for executive posts.

Japanese women, increasingly hired since the 1980s after legislation ensuring sexual equality in employment, are only recently starting to move up the corporate ladder.

“Companies are trying to add female board members because they need diversity. But that doesn’t really mean the position of women has improved. It’s an important step. But women who’ve risen internally within the company have to start joining boards,” said Fukushima, 55, who is regional managing director for Japan at Korn/Ferry International, a U.S. executive-recruitment company.

Just a few years ago, Fukushima’s clients were skeptical about the ability of women to

command respect in the male-dominated world of Japanese business, she recalls. These days, they recognize that women have the talent, she said.

There’s no question Sato and Fukushima are both extraordinary women.

But each took a different approach in overcoming the obstacles of a sexist society: Sato armed herself with a nationally recognized credential; Fukushima shaped her career at American companies.

When Sato graduated from the University of Tokyo in 1958, she couldn’t even apply for a job in the private sector. Those jobs were closed to women. So she became a career bureaucrat to get her foot in the door.

The only ministry then hiring women was the Labor

Ministry—only because it had orders from the U.S. Occupation after World War II to do so. Sato eventually rose to assistant minister and was appointed ambassador to Kenya in 1991.

Fukushima, meanwhile, was educated at Harvard and Stanford, in addition to her schooling in Japan, and started as a Japanese instructor at Harvard.

The network of acquaintances she acquired through her campus life and her husband, Glen S. Fukushima, a California native and former deputy assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Japan and China who now is co-president and representative director at NCR Japan Ltd. Those contacts were key to her moving smoothly through job hops from consultant to executive-search expert.



Fukushima

60th commemoration

SHELL STAMP

# Bush pledges strong-dollar policy

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush pledged Wednesday to work with Congress to reduce the government’s huge budget deficit as a key step in assuring the world that his administration supports a strong dollar.

“We’ll do everything we can in the upcoming legislative session to send a signal to the markets that we’ll deal with our deficit, which, hopefully, will cause people to want to buy dollars,” Bush told reporters.

Bush’s comments came following a meeting at the White House with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who had raised the issue of the dollar’s plunge in value against the euro, the

currency of Italy and 11 other European nations.

“The policy of my government is a strong-dollar policy,” Bush said during a brief news conference following the Oval Office meeting, echoing statements he and Treasury Secretary John Snow have made numerous times over the past three years as the dollar’s value has fallen sharply against many major currencies.

Bush’s comments did not prevent financial markets on Wednesday from pushing the dollar’s value lower against a range of currencies, including

the euro. Currency markets focused more on a Treasury Department report showing that foreigners’ purchases of U.S. stocks and bonds in October fell to the slowest pace in a year.

A weaker U.S. currency would make American exports cheaper and thus more attractive in foreign markets while driving up the costs of imported cars, television sets and the billions of dollars of other foreign products that American consumers have been snapping up.

Bush’s comments on the

dollar came one day after the government reported that the U.S. trade deficit hit a monthly record of \$55.5 billion in October.

Bush told reporters that the trade deficit was “easy to resolve. People can buy more United States products if they’re worried about the trade deficit.”

The swelling size of the trade deficit has raised concerns among economists that the dollar’s decline, which has been gradual so far, could suddenly accelerate as foreigners grow worried about the ability of the United States to keep attracting enough foreign capital to finance trade deficits at such high levels.



Bush

# Companies rapidly cutting health benefits

WASHINGTON (AP)—Many companies are dropping their promise of health benefits for future retirees, who now might have to stay on the job longer and rely on government health care in their old age.

Eight percent of employers with at least 1,000 workers said they had eliminated subsidized retiree health benefits for some workers this year, and 11 percent more said they probably would do so next year, according to a study released Tuesday by the benefits consulting firm Hewitt Associates and the nonprofit

Kaiser Family Foundation.

Most of those affected were newly hired, but some companies said the change applied to workers who had been on the payroll longer.

The number of companies that offer health coverage to retirees has been on the decline for 15 years.

But among those that continue to subsidize retiree coverage, the move to treat current and former workers differently reflects a desire to leave health benefits in place for those who have already retired despite several consecutive

years of double-digit increases in health care costs.

Since 2000, more than 100 large employers have chosen this path.

Some have cut out subsidies but have told employees they can continue coverage under company health plans after they retire, a much cheaper option than seeking health insurance elsewhere.

“Retiree health care coverage is kind of a slowly vanishing species,” Kaiser president Drew Altman said.

The prospect of losing health coverage in retirement is trou-

bling particularly to people who are considering changing jobs or who want to retire between the ages of 55 and 64. Younger retirees can find it difficult to afford health insurance when they can’t get it from their employers.

Medicare, the government health program for older and disabled Americans, kicks in at age 65. Its benefits typically have been less generous than those offered by employers, mainly because the workplace plans cover prescription drugs. Medicare’s drug insurance program begins in 2006.

# Stocks extend rally with modest gains

NEW YORK (AP)—Stocks extended their rally with modest gains Wednesday, as Wall Street overlooked climbing oil prices to focus on strong results from Lehman Brothers and Sprint’s \$35 billion deal to acquire Nextel Communications.

The Dow Jones industrial average gained 15.00, or 0.14 percent, to 10,691.45, just 46 points shy of its high for the year. The broader gauges also rose, besting multiyear highs reached in the previous session. The S&P 500 added 2.34, or 0.19 percent, to 1,205.72. The Nasdaq composite index rose 2.71, or 0.13 percent, to 2,162.55.

Bullish corporate news has helped the Standard & Poor’s 500 and the Nasdaq composite index stretch to their highest levels since the summer of 2001 this week, but the three-day rally appeared to stagger Wednesday as stocks drifted in and out of negative range. Analysts said the lack of strong selling pressure was a positive signal, though.

“The markets are a little bit flat, it’s nothing rip-roaring. Normally when you get to a significant trading level ... there’s a natural inclination to take profits,” said Brian

Pears, head equity trader at Victory Capital Management in Cleveland. “The fact that we’re still higher speaks to the strength of the underlying bullish trend.”

Oil prices trekked upward following the government’s weekly inventory report, which showed a 100,000 barrel decline in crude stores. Supplies of distillate fuels, which include heating oil, were unchanged—a disappointment to traders who had expected a build of 1 million barrels. Light, sweet crude for January delivery surged \$2.37 to \$44.19 on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

In Washington, President Bush offered assurances that his administration was working with Congress to reduce the nation’s twin budget and trade deficits, and said he supports “a strong-dollar policy.” The U.S. government has done little to support the greenback, however, which continued to weaken against the euro on Wednesday. Some economists say this is by design; a weak dollar should help make U.S. goods more competitive in foreign markets and could curb domestic demand for imports.

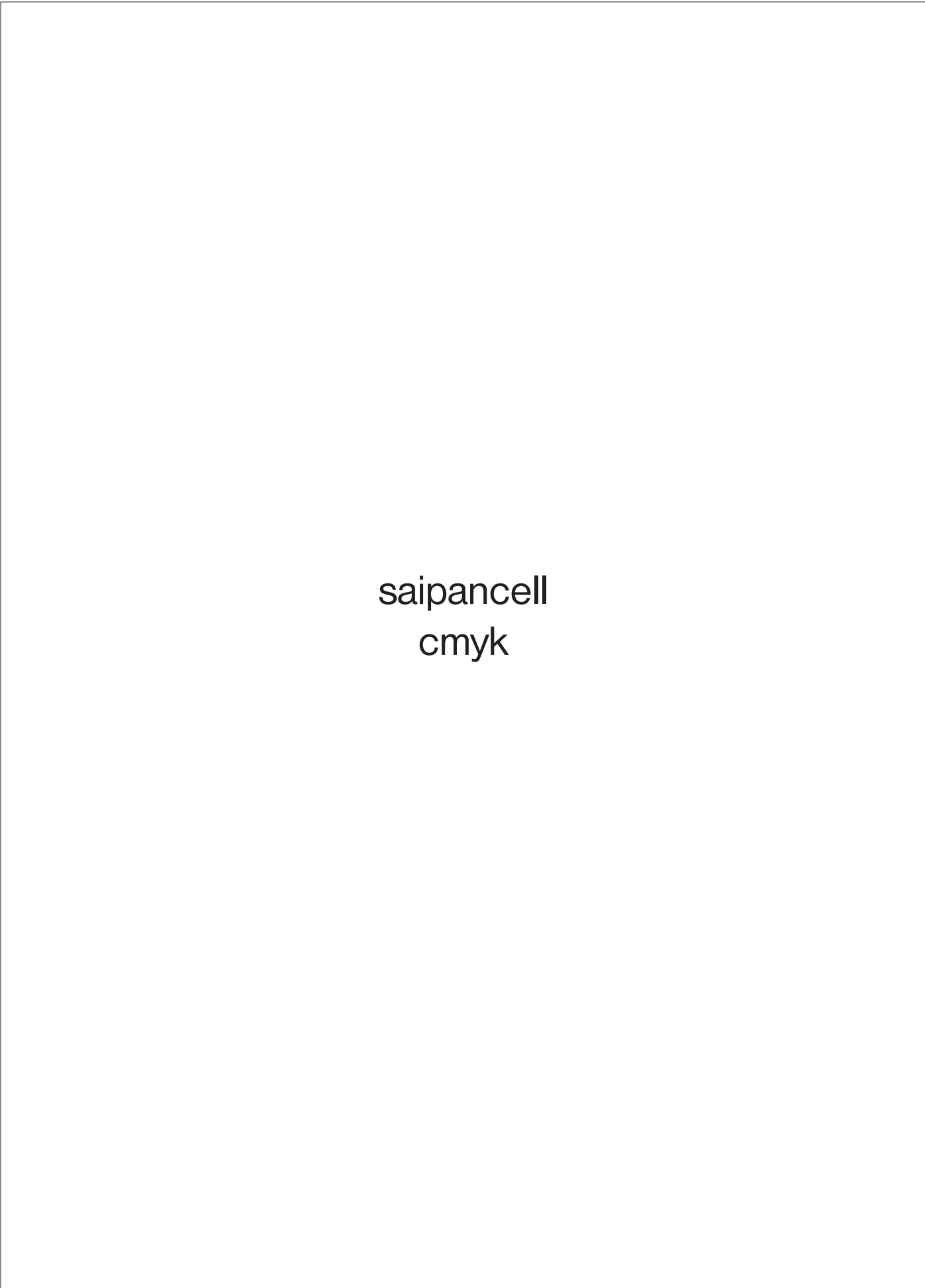
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# Nation

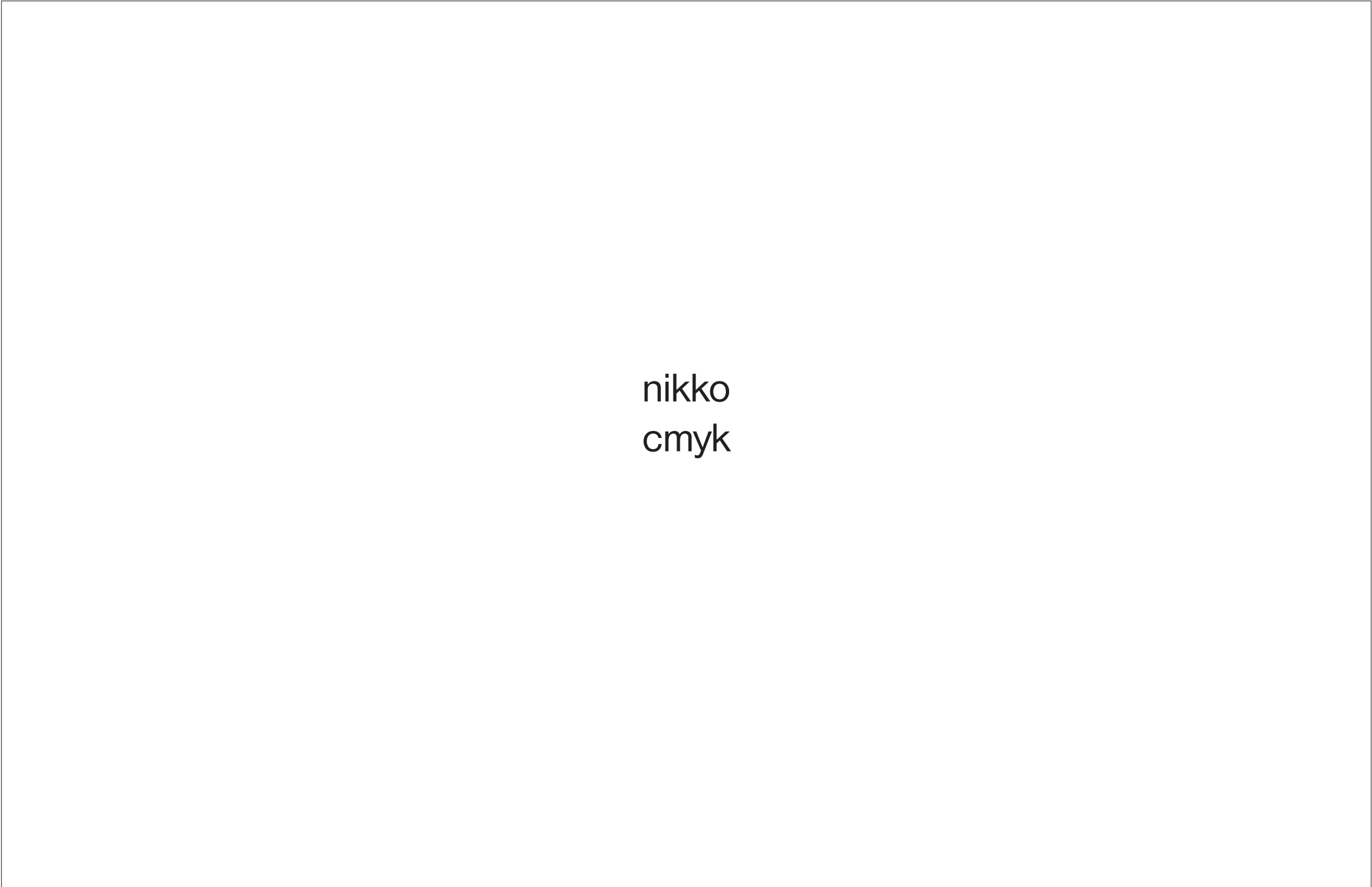


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saipancell  
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JAMA



nikko  
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# AP: Woman died during AIDS study

By JOHN SOLOMON and  
RANDY HERSCHAFT  
AP WRITERS

Joyce Ann Hafford died without ever holding the son she had tried to save from contracting AIDS by taking an experimental drug regimen administered by government-funded researchers during her pregnancy.

But even before her stunned family could grieve, the 33-year-old's death was reverberating among the government's top scientists in Washington. They quickly realized the drugs the HIV-positive woman from Memphis, Tenn., was taking likely caused the liver failure that killed her.

Reports of her declining

health were being monitored in late July 2003 at the National Institutes of Health as she lay on a respirator, and the case eventually reached the nation's chief AIDS researcher, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press.

"Ouch! Not much we can do about dum dums," Dr. Edmund Tramont, NIH's AIDS Division chief, responded in an e-mail after his staff reported that doctors continued to administer the drugs nevirapine and Combivir to Hafford despite signs of liver failure.

Nevirapine is an antiretroviral AIDS drug used since the mid-1990s, and the government has warned since at least 2000 that it could cause lethal liver prob-

lems or rashes when taken in multiple doses over time.

Hafford's family says they were never told NIH had concluded that the experimental drug regimen likely caused her death until AP gave them copies of NIH's internal case documents this month. They were left to believe Hafford had died from AIDS complications but began pursuing litigation to learn more.

"They tried to make it sound like she was just sick. They never connected it to the drug," said Rubbie King, Hafford's sister.

"If it were the disease, solely the disease, and the complications associated with the disease, that would be more readily acceptable than her being administered medication

that came with warnings that the medical community failed to get ... to her."

NIH officials acknowledge that experimental drugs, most likely nevirapine, caused her death, and that keeping the family in the dark was inappropriate. But NIH usually leaves disclosures like that to the doctors who treated her.

"We feel horrible that something like this would happen to anyone in any circumstance," said Dr. H. Clifford Lane, NIH's No. 2 infectious disease specialist. "There are risks in research and we try to minimize them."

Jim Kyle, a lawyer representing Regional Medical Center in Memphis where Hafford died, declined comment because of



In this image taken from an Associated Press Television News video Rubbie King plays with her nephew, Sterling Hafford, in Memphis, Tenn., Monday Dec. 13, 2004.

the family's pending litigation. The doctors there deferred to NIH to comment.

The study during which Hafford died recently led researchers to conclude that nevirapine poses risks when taken over time by certain pregnant women. "Continuous nevirapine may be associated with increased toxicity among HIV-1 infected pregnant women" with certain liver cell counts, the study concluded.

Lane said Hafford should have signed a 15-page, NIH-approved consent form at the start of the experiment specifically warning her of the risks of liver failure. The family says Hafford seemed unaware of the liver risks. They even kept the bottle of nevirapine showing it had no safety warnings.

"My daughter didn't know any of the warning signs," said Rubbie Malone, Hafford's mother and now caretaker of Hafford's new baby and older son. "She never got to hold her baby."

Lane confirmed the nevirapine bottle Hafford received likely wouldn't have had safety warnings because the experiment's rules called for the patient to be unaware of the exact

drug effects to avoid the placebo effect, or patient influence, on the test results. That means the consent form would have been her lone warning about potential liver problems, he said.

And that 15-page, single-spaced consent form is chock full of complex medical terms like "hypersensitivity reactions" and "pharmacokinetic test." The warning about potential liver problems shows up on the 6th page, where it said liver inflammation was possible and that it "rarely may lead to severe and life threatening liver damage and death."

Hafford, who was HIV-positive but otherwise healthy, agreed to participate in the NIH-funded research project that provided her multiple doses of nevirapine, also known as Viramune, to protect her soon-to-be-born son, Sterling, from getting HIV at birth.

The project was an outgrowth of earlier research in Africa that concluded the drug could be taken in single doses safely to protect newborns half the time.

"She didn't want her baby to be born with HIV infection if it could be prevented at any cost," said King, her sister.

SPEAKER  
VICE SPEAKER  
XMAS

## Interceptor missile fails in test launch

WASHINGTON (AP)—An experimental interceptor missile failed to get off the ground in a test of the U.S. national missile defense system early Wednesday, raising new doubts about prospects for the imminent activation of the system.

In the test, a target missile, a simulated ICBM with a mock warhead, was launched without problem from Kodiak, Alaska, at 12:45 a.m. EST, a statement from the Defense Department's Missile Defense Agency said.

However, 16 minutes later, an "unknown anomaly" led to an automatic shutdown of the interceptor missile shortly before it was to launch from the Ronald Reagan Test Site at Kwajalein Atoll in the central Pacific Ocean.

The target missile crashed into the ocean.

The agency gave no other details and said program officials will review pre-launch

data to determine the cause for the shutdown. Most missile launching systems are designed to shut down automatically as a safety feature, but it was unclear what tripped the system, officials said.

The test was the first full test of the system in nearly two years. The Missile Defense Agency has attempted to conduct the test several times this month, but scrubbed each one for a variety of reasons, including weather problems and a malfunction on a recovery vessel not directly related to the equipment being tested.

Philip Coyle, the Pentagon's former chief of testing who has become a critic of the Bush administration's missile defense plans, said the cause of the failure could have been anything from a software glitch to a major hardware malfunction.

He called the failure a "serious setback."



townhouse  
+green

# Federal agency disputes pill's benefits

By MARILYNN MARCHIONE  
AP MEDICAL WRITER

Federal officials Wednesday backed away from the findings of two major studies on birth control pills, saying the research was flawed and that a new analysis shows there is no evidence that oral contraceptives cut the risk of heart disease.

The research, presented at a medical meeting in October, created a stir because it was from the nation's largest women's health study and found that women on the pill had lower risks of heart disease and no

increased risk of breast cancer. That was contrary to what many previous studies had found.

But Dr. Barbara Alving of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which funds and oversees the women's health study, said the work by researchers from Wayne State University in Detroit had not been reviewed by the study's leaders or the government before it was presented.

A new analysis by senior statisticians determined that the heart findings were flawed and that the breast cancer findings now also are suspect.

Once age and other factors were

considered, they "could not find a relationship" between pill use and heart disease, said Alving.

The research was from the Women's Health Initiative, best known for its landmark finding in 2002 that taking hormones after menopause raised the risk of certain cancers and heart problems. But it is not the best kind of study for determining risks of oral contraceptives, Alving said. That's because it relies on women's memories of what drugs they used in previous years rather than actual hospital or medical records.

Previous studies that were

more scientifically sound have found that pill-users have a small increased risk of blood clots, heart attacks and stroke, she said. The research presented at a medical meeting in Philadelphia two months ago reported a small benefit—pill users reportedly had 8 percent less risk of cardiovascular disease and 7 percent less risk of developing any form of cancer.

But those findings were based on information women gave about whether they'd ever had heart problems or cancer, and were not verified with medical records as other WHI findings

have been, Alving said.

"There is room for a lot of bias to be introduced," she said.

John Oliver, vice president for research at Wayne State, said the scientists were reviewing their work and would have no comment now.

"They want to look at the data. They're in contact with the Women's Health Initiative about how to proceed," he said.

The university also issued a statement apologizing for any confusion caused by the studies, which it now calls preliminary, and pledged to publish full results when they are available.



## Owner of dogs that killed woman sentenced

**KIOWA, Colo.** (AP)—The owner of three pit bulls that fatally mauled a woman last year was sentenced Wednesday to six years in prison.

Jacqueline McCuen had faced three to six years in prison after pleading guilty in September to owning a dangerous dog causing death.

McCuen, of Elbert County, was charged after the death of Jennifer Brooke, 40. Brooke had been walking outside to feed her horses when she was attacked by three dogs, which also attacked two men before they were shot and killed.

Seven months before Brooke's death, McCuen's dogs attacked a jogger, prosecutors said.

McCuen's boyfriend was also charged and was scheduled for trial next month.

## LAPD plan to curb flashlight beatings

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—The city's police commission unveiled a plan Tuesday aimed at discouraging officers from using flashlights as weapons, except in emergencies.

The proposal comes months after a television broadcast showed Officer John Hatfield striking a motorist 11 times with a flashlight following a foot chase. The June 23 incident sparked widespread objection to the use of flashlights as weapons.

"Officers don't mind being held accountable as long as they have a clear policy to follow, and that's what we're providing here," said Alan Skobin, vice president of the police commission.

The proposed policy, to be considered Jan. 11, stops short of the near-total bans on practice enacted in other large cities. It states that flashlights should only be used for light and should only be used as a weapon in very unusual circumstances.

## Pauline Gore, mother of former VP, dies

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** (AP)—Pauline Gore, whose son Al became vice president and nearly captured the presidency and whose husband had a long and distinguished career in Congress, died Wednesday. She was 92.

She had been weakened in recent years by strokes and a heart attack, and died in at her home in Carthage.

Trained as a lawyer, Pauline Gore was a familiar figure on the campaign trails of her husband, Albert Gore Sr., and her son, former Vice President Al Gore.

She played a central role in shaping her husband's campaign strategy. Gore Sr. was a liberal Democrat who served in the House from 1939 to 1953 and in the Senate from 1953 to 1970 and aspired to the presidency himself. He died in 1998.

## Fla. motel where girl died was reported

**ORLANDO, Fla.** (AP)—Days before a 4-year-old girl died from a blow to the head in a filthy motel room shared with five siblings and her parents, the state child welfare agency was told about her living conditions but declined to investigate, according to documents released Wednesday.

Kai Gadison was found dead Monday after her mother called 911 to report the child wasn't breathing. She died of blunt force trauma to the head, an autopsy report said. The mother, 27-year-old Kenya Hill, is being held on six counts of child abuse and violation of probation.

Sheriff's deputies found dirty diapers and spoiled food littering the motel room, urine-soaked mattresses and baby bottles containing moldy milk and what may have been maggots.

Hill's probation officer from a 2002 case of alleged child abuse had visited the motel on Dec. 2,

noted the "suspect" conditions and later called a state Department of Children & Families abuse hot line.

The agency replied that no law "prohibited a person from living in a one-room motel with their six children" and no further investigation was required, according to a Department of Corrections probation violation report.

Hill and her husband, Nathan Gadison, pleaded no contest in 2002 to charges stemming from his use of a belt to beat at least two children, including the girl who died this week, officials said Tuesday.

The child welfare agency briefly removed the two from the parents' custody but ended its supervision more than a year ago.

A sheriff's spokeswoman has said the husband is not considered a suspect in the child's death and may have been away from the motel at the time.

## Hawks get co-op board's approval to return

**NEW YORK** (AP)—A week after two red-tailed hawks were evicted from their aerie outside a luxury apartment building, the board that runs the high-rise on Fifth Avenue has given in to the demands of bird lovers and agreed to let Pale Male and Lola rebuild their nest. Now the question is whether the birds that flew the co-op will come home to roost.

The possible return of Pale Male and Lola came after a week of angry protests and bizarre Big Apple street theater on a stately block of Manhattan. Women chanted with stuffed birds on their heads, ambulance sirens screamed in support of the hawks, and a 13-year-old girl tap-danced in a cow costume in the middle of Fifth Avenue.

The tale of two hawks began a decade ago, when Pale Male took up residence at 927 Fifth Ave. With a succession of mates, he raised 25 chicks to the



The former nesting site of the red-tail hawks named Pale Male and Lola, sits on the outside of the building at 927 Fifth Avenue in New York, below temporary scaffolding attached to the building, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2004.

delight of many New Yorkers, who watched the brood through binoculars and telescopes. Each year, more sticks were added

until the nest, on an arched cornice outside a 12th-floor window, came to weigh 200 to 300 pounds.

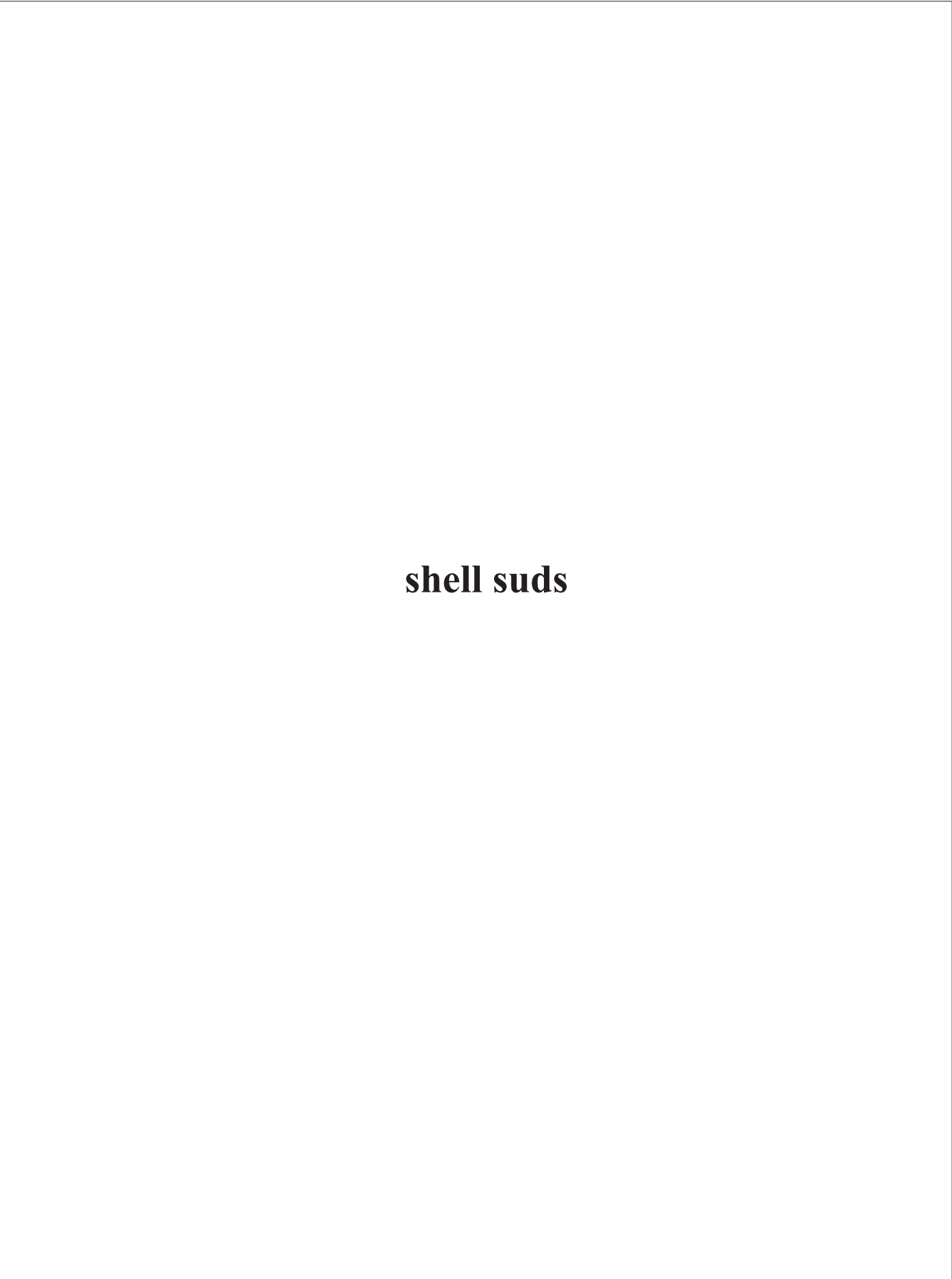
DAIICHI SPA  
CMYK

# World

shell visor  
cmyk



shell suds





JOETEN MOTORS  
+BLUE/RED

# Five suspects in Philippine blast arrested

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—Five suspects in a bombing that killed at least 14 people at a southern Philippine market have been arrested with explosives in their possession, military officials said Thursday.

Military spokesman Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said two women and three men were ap-

prehended Wednesday in General Santos, where Sunday’s bombing also wounded 70 people.

Authorities recovered from them a mortar, a blasting cap, a hand grenade, electrical wire, C-4 plastic explosives and a pack of an unknown white powder, the officials said.

Col. Alfredo Cayton, the area

brigade commander, said one of the suspects was identified by a witness as a bomber.

He refused to elaborate, and it wasn’t immediately clear if the suspects belong to any terrorist organization. He said authorities have “a solid lead” and that divulging details “might compromise our ongoing operation.”

National police chief Edgar Aglipay said investigators were looking into the possibility that a dispute between two groups wrangling over a market stall may have led to the bombing, but the involvement of militant groups hasn’t been discounted.

“We are following all leads including the business rivalry

(angle),” Cayton said. “Although we have the suspects, we are interrogating them to determine the actual motive.”

The investigation in General Santos, about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) south of Manila, is also being helped by Australian police, said senior police inspector Maximo Sebastian.

A police report said high explosives, possibly TNT, were used in the attack.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo promised a swift investigation into the bombing, which shattered a months-long lull in bomb attacks in the country’s volatile south, where Muslim insurgents have been fighting for a separate homeland.

# Philippines, UN appeal for aid to help disaster victims

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Philippines and international aid groups appealed Wednesday for donations to help millions Filipinos rebuild their homes and ward off disease following a series of deadly storms.

The northeastern Philippines was battered by four typhoons and tropical storms that began late last month and came in rapid succession, killing more than 1,000 people and leaving 566 others missing, the Office of Civil Defense said.

“The sudden mudslides and flash floods have robbed families of the homes and possessions they have spent a lifetime to build up,” said Senator Richard Gordon, head of the Philippine Red Cross.

The Philippines, the United Nations and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies called Wednesday for about US\$10 million (€7.51 million) in aid as the World Health Organization warned that some 3.6 million people were threatened by diseases such as malaria and diarrhea.

“The priority now, from WHO’s perspective, is to safeguard the health of survivors and to rehabilitate public health services. This task will demand considerable funds and great commitment from all involved,” said Dr. Jean-Marc Olive, the WHO’s representative in the Philippines.

The civil defense office said the Philippines has received about 58.7 million pesos (US\$1.05 million, €788,870) from foreign donors.

## Manila to become world’s 12th biggest city by 2010

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Philippine capital Manila is expected to climb from the 16th to the 12th largest city in the world by 2010, officials and a U.N.-funded report said Wednesday.

The State of the Philippine Population Report 2004—prepared by the Commission on Population and funded by the U.N. Population Fund—also forecast that the Philippines will be 65 percent urbanized by 2020, up from 48 percent in 2000.

The UNPF said in 2000 Metro Manila ranked 16th on a list of the top 20 megacities in the world, with 10.9 million people.

Based on current trends and projections, Metro Manila will be the 12th largest city in the world by 2010, said Commission on Population Executive Director Tomas Osias. By 2015, the population is expected to total 14.8 million.

Areas near Metro Manila and the central Philippines’ Metro Iloilo have displayed a “spill-over effect,” where contiguous regions become “metro shadows,” the report said.

“Recent studies show that while more people troop to urban areas, the core cities themselves are becoming too congested and thus, less appealing,” the report said. “Recent data confirm that smaller towns and citizens are starting to grow faster than the larger ones.”

With the Philippine’s current population at 84 million and growing yearly by 1.8 million, local governments face increasing problems with sanitation, pollution, transportation, and peace and order, the report said.



### Arroyo declares Christmas cease-fire

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo announced Wednesday a three-week cease-fire with communist rebels during the Christmas season.

The government and the communist New People’s Army traditionally separately declare a unilateral suspension of hostilities during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

In ceremonies to honor Filipino workers overseas, Arroyo said the cease-fire will start on Thursday and end on Jan. 5.

There was no immediate response from the rebels.

The government and the communist-led National Democratic Front have been holding on-and-off talks to end 35 years of insurgency since 1992, but the two sides have not agreed to a long-term truce, resulting in sporadic firefights between guerrillas and soldiers around the country.

### ADB warns of instability unless RP tackles budget deficit

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The Asian Development Bank warned Wednesday that the Philippines could face economic instability unless it tackles its growing budget deficit and improves revenue collection.

The regional bank said despite moderate growth in recent years, averaging 4.7 percent to 5.7 percent, unemployment remains high and investments have faltered as the deficit, projected at 197.8 billion pesos (US\$35 billion; €26 billion) this year, hampers higher growth rates.

“The grave fiscal situation—caused mainly by weak revenue mobilization—dominates macroeconomic management and, if not urgently addressed, has the potential to cause economic instability,” ADB country director Thomas Crouch and economist Xuelin Liu said in the bank’s annual economic review for the Philippines.

TOWNHOUSE  
+RED/GREEN

# US says it has 6 open Afghan abuse cases

**KABUL, Afghanistan** (AP)—The U.S. military said Wednesday it has at least six open cases of prisoners who died in custody in Afghanistan dating back to 2002, but claimed it has taken steps to ensure against abuse of detainees.

Amid the fallout over abuse of prisoners in Iraq, Brig. Gen. Charles Jacoby Jr. was dispatched in May to examine treatment of current detainees at the two U.S. prisons and 20 “field holding sites” in Afghanistan. His report, which is still under review with no time set for release, found no evidence of abuse, Maj. Mark McCann told a news conference Wednesday in Kabul.

However, the report does not examine earlier incidents, including the deaths of prisoners, and The Washington Post has reported that Jacoby found many shortcomings, including inadequate enforcement of approved interrogation rules.

“We can’t go back and change the past,” McCann said. “What we can do is ensure that there are conditions in place now for in the future, where we ensure that this stuff will not happen again.”

Pentagon officials earlier this week put the number of prisoner deaths in Afghanistan that have been investigated since mid-2002 at eight, a higher number than previously reported.

McCann said three of the fatalities remain under investigation and three are pending judicial disposition. One case is complete, but he would not provide details. He did not know the status of the eighth.

He would not say how many detainees U.S. forces are holding in Afghanistan and declined media requests to visit the detention facilities, saying it would violate Geneva Convention rules on treatment of prisoners of war.



## Japan to issue visa for ex-Taiwan leader

**TOKYO** (AP)—Japan plans to issue a visa for former Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui to visit Japan this year, Japanese media reported Thursday, citing a foreign ministry official.

Lee would be allowed into Japan for the first time since he paid a visit to receive treatment for a heart condition in 2001, a Japanese Foreign Ministry official was quoted as saying by the Kyodo News agency.

Lee reportedly wants to come to Japan for a sightseeing trip with his family.

If confirmed, the decision could add to tensions between Japan and China. Relations between the two Asian powers eroded over the incursion in Japanese waters by a Chinese submarine last month.

## Koizumi fears Iraq becoming terrorist hub

**TOKYO** (AP)—Japan’s prime minister said Wednesday that Tokyo needed to keep its troops in Iraq to prevent the country from becoming a “hub for terrorists.” The deployment is Japan’s most dangerous military mission since World War II.

Japan has some 550 non-combat soldiers in southern Iraq to purify water and rebuild infrastructure. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s Cabinet last week voted to extend their mission for another year, citing the need to stabilize the Middle Eastern country.

In an interview with CNN in Tokyo, Koizumi said Japan had a responsibility to help out in Iraq because it owed its own prosper-

ity to world peace and stability.

“We should never allow Iraq to turn into a hub for terrorists,” Koizumi told the network.

## Moderate earthquake shakes eastern Taiwan

**TAIPEI, Taiwan** (AP)—A moderate earthquake jolted eastern Taiwan on Thursday, the Central Weather Bureau said, but no damage or injuries were reported.

The magnitude 5.2 quake’s epicenter was under the Pacific Ocean, about 40 miles east of the city of Hualien, according to the weather bureau.

Hualien is 90 miles southeast of the capital, Taipei.

Quakes frequently rattle Taiwan, but most are minor and cause little or no damage. However, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake in central Taiwan in September 1999 killed more than 2,300 people.

## Wife of late Taiwanese leader dies at 88

**TAIPEI, Taiwan** (AP)—Faina Chiang, the shy Russian-born wife of former Taiwanese President Chiang Ching-kuo, died on Wednesday at 88.

She was suffering from asthma when she died at the Veterans’ General Hospital in Taipei, the state-funded Central News Agency reported. Cable TV stations showed political leaders going to the hospital to pay their respects.

The widow—also known by her Chinese name Chiang Fang-liang—had been seriously ill for years and used a wheelchair during her rare public appearances.

The leader of her late husband’s Nationalist Party, Lien Chan, said she died “peacefully” shortly after noon.

# Body of Turk engineer found in Afghanistan

**KABUL, Afghanistan** (AP)—The latest abduction of a foreigner in Afghanistan—a Turkish engineer working on a U.S.-sponsored road project—ended when the kidnappers killed him, apparently so he wouldn’t slow them down with police hot on their trail.

Eyup Orel worked for Serhat, a Turkish subcontractor for the U.S.-based Louis Berger Group, company vice president Tom Nicastro said. Earlier this year, an Australian pilot working for Berger was killed when a man raked his helicopter with AK-47 fire.

Orel’s body was found on a mountainside by security forces who were searching for him, said Jamil Jumbesh, head of the Interior Ministry’s anti-terror division.

There was no immediate claim

of responsibility. Bandits and insurgents from the Taliban and other Islamic extremist groups operate in the area about 110 miles east of the capital, Kabul.

President Hamid Karzai condemned the killing and said he ordered security agencies “to use any means possible” to bring the kidnappers to justice. “I am angered that the enemies of Afghanistan have killed a brother and fellow Muslim in pursuit of their goal of disrupting reconstruction in Afghanistan.”

The U.S. Embassy said it was “angered and saddened” by the death.

“The enemies of Afghanistan are again trying to harm and intimidate those who are committed to helping Afghanistan,” an embassy statement said. “This cowardly act will not deter U.S.

resolve to help Afghanistan stand on its feet.”

Orel was shot six or seven times in the head and torso, Kunar provincial police chief Mateullha Sofie said, adding that it appeared the kidnappers killed him to move faster, abandoning his body high on a mountain as police moved in.

The kidnappers managed to escape, taking advantage of the rugged, forested terrain, Sofie said.

The body was found Wednesday morning by a search party of two dozen police and villagers, who carried it to lower ground, Sofie said. A helicopter was brought in to evacuate the body.

Orel’s driver and interpreter said 12 armed men wearing military-style uniforms stopped their car Tuesday afternoon as they were traveling from the road

project in Kunar province to the city of Jalalabad, where they have been staying. Police found the car abandoned. The Afghan driver and interpreter were held briefly.

The kidnappers later exchanged gunfire with police manning a nearby security post on the road, and one police officer was wounded.

Security, particularly in the countryside, is one of the top priorities for Karzai ahead of parliamentary elections in the spring.

In March, Afghan forces freed two kidnapped Turkish engineers and an Afghan translator in a shootout that left their two captors dead and two Afghan soldiers injured. Another Turkish engineer and an Afghan soldier were killed during the abduction a week earlier on the road from Kabul to the south.

ICONNECT  
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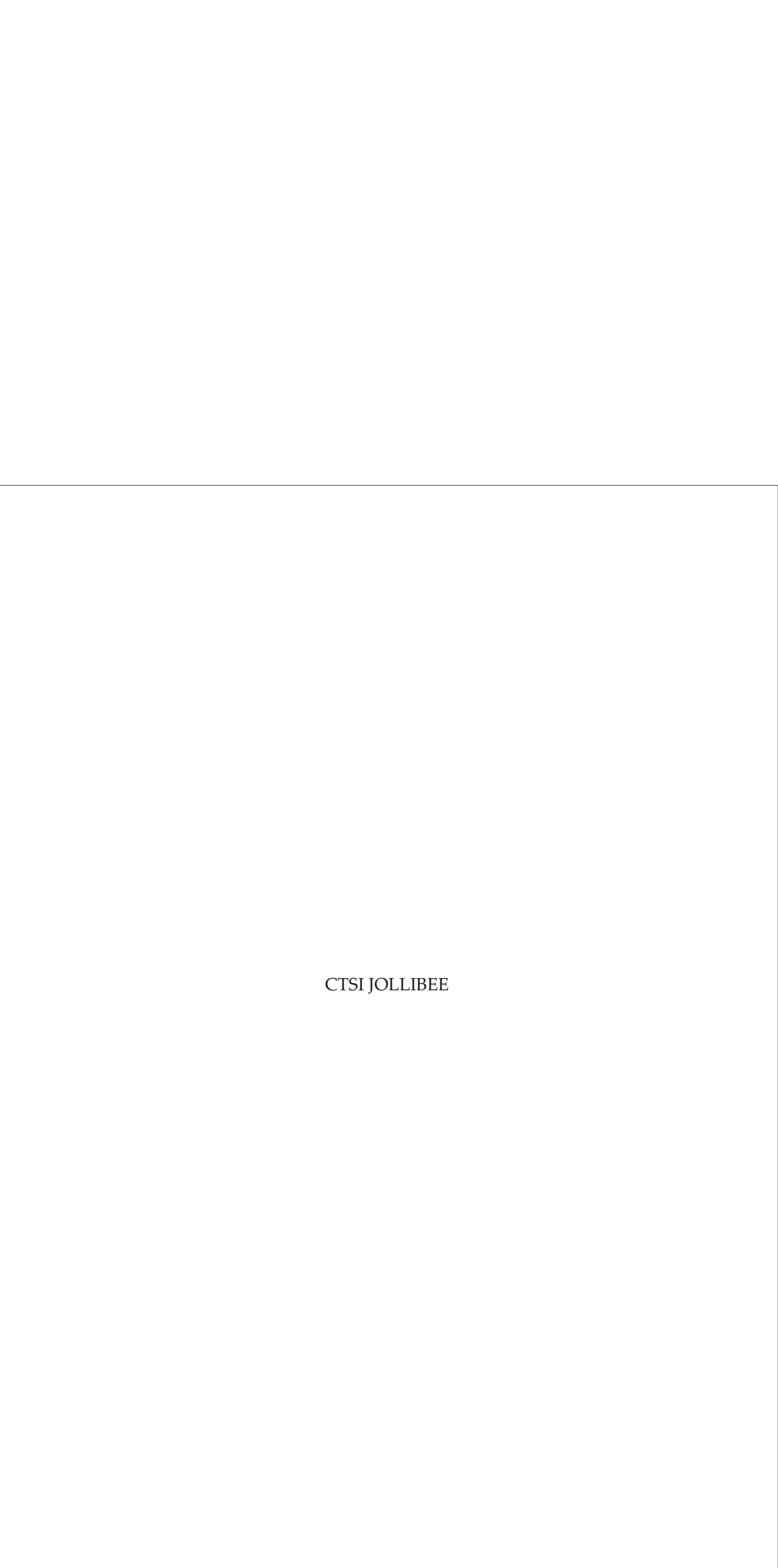












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MAZDA 6  
CMYK

Life & Style

I shop, I wrap, and this is the thanks I get?

By ANNIE GROER  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Dear Aunt Martha,  
Thank you for the beautiful sweater. How did you know pink was my favorite color? I can't wait to see you and Uncle Dave when you visit at Easter. Every time I wear my beautiful sweater, I'll think of you.

Love, Peggy

Read those four sentences carefully and consider them a holiday gift. They illustrate the simple archi-

ture of an all-purpose thank-you note—whether scrawled in pencil by a first-grader or penned with a Mont Blanc by a Fortune 500 CEO. This is the way to do it, declares Peggy Newfield, founder and president of the American School of Protocol in Atlanta, which trains adults to teach etiquette to children. In Newfield's universe, the Aunt Martha template requires that "the first and second sentences and fourth sentence are about the same thing"—to wit, the wonderful gift—and the third sentence is unrelated—it's about the benefactors.

Her lesson could not be more timely. 'Tis the giving season: Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year celebrations, holiday weddings and engagement parties. Though standards may have slipped precariously in these modern times, gift-givers and hosts can still become righteously offended by a recipient's failure to acknowledge generosity and hospitality. "Thank-you notes make all the difference between feeling grateful and showing your gratitude," says Kate Spade, author of a slim new etiquette book,

"Manners" (Simon & Schuster, 96 pp., \$20). The longtime note-writer—Spade's signature handbag collection was followed by a line of social stationery—credits Mom with raising her right. "Every Christmas without fail, my mother gave me stationery," then "hounded me" until all the thank-yous were written, she says. Once one is beyond the reach of parental prodding, the specter of having to pick up pen and commit grateful prose to paper can paralyze some respondents for months. The same prospect can deeply

irk others, who consider the social nicety an outmoded act of institutional insincerity. Yet the practice of expressing thanks in writing is on the rise, according to those in the correspondence industry. "Things became so informal," says Rachel Bolton, a spokeswoman at Hallmark Cards. "But now there is a counter-trend in a return to etiquette. ... More than 80 percent of people think a handwritten note is the best way to say thank you for a gift." At Crane and Co., a leading stationery manufacturer based in Dalton, Mass., sales of pre-printed thank-you cards have enjoyed "high, significant double-digit growth over the last two years," says Anita Brady, vice president of the social stationery division. Personalized note cards and paper are enjoying a resurgence, and sales of etiquette books are "exploding." Surprisingly, Brady credits e-mail, so often blamed for the decline of personal correspondence, for easing millions of people into the thank-you note habit. "E-mail made a lot of people who would not put something in writing into writers," she says. "They send e-mails that might not look pretty, but they have to use the written word, and we think it has taken away that hurdle of sitting down and saying, 'Oh, what am I going to write?'" Still, there is that little matter of getting into the habit of actually writing a thank-you note. The Emily Post Institute, run by descendants of America's most famous etiquette adviser, suggests that parents "make it fun. If you view this as drudgery, so will your child." The lesson to drive home is "receiving thank-you notes makes people feel good. And it lets them know that the gift arrived safely and is appreciated," counsels the institute Web site, www.emilypost.com. One woman earned Post plaudits for staging a family thank-a-thon at the kitchen table every January. She assembles pens, pencils, crayons, stationery, stamps, lists and addresses. Little ones draw pictures, older children write a few sentences, Mom and Dad help with spelling and envelope addressing. When everyone is done, out come the cookies and cocoa. Frequent note-writers recommend putting pen to paper the night of, or morning after, a dinner or a weekend stay at a friend's home, when memories are still fresh and those few sentences will sound conversational and genuine. Multi-taskers advise keeping note cards and pre-stamped envelopes in the office, the glove compartment, the purse or briefcase to take advantage of short bursts of down time. Once you sit down to write a thank-you note, there are con-

flicting etiquette edicts to sort out. We talked to a half-dozen "experts" in etiquette and the stationery industry, and consulted another half-dozen books and Web sites to determine the "correct" way of doing things. Gray areas remain. □ Must a thank-you be handwritten, or will a phone call suffice? (A note is called for if the gift arrived by mail or you've been the guest of honor at a party. A phone call will do if you've been one of several guests at an event.) □ How about e-mail? (A last resort.) □ If you have thanked someone in person when opening a gift, must you also write? (Not necessarily. Let your conscience, and the gift's extravagance or rarity, be your guide. Shower and wedding gifts, however, always require notes.) □ How soon should a recipient express written thanks for a gift or other kindness? (Up to a week is all right, but three days is better.) □ Is there more leeway for brides? And let's be clear: Women still write the bulk of notes for gifts given to couples. (Two weeks to a year, depending on the size of the wedding, according to several etiquette consultants and bridal Web sites.) □ Should condolence cards, flowers and other expressions of sympathy be acknowledged? (Yes, preferably in writing, despite the availability of pre-printed thank-you cards from funeral homes.) Wait, there's more. Some protocol purists insist notes be written only in dark ink on pale, personalized stock—folded note paper for women, flat correspondence cards for men and, increasingly, women. But millions of Americans send and receive cards pre-printed with a cheery "Thank You!" on the front. (Never mind that it may be considered redundant because the first two words of the note should also be "thank you.") While etiquette experts invoke the "better late than never" maxim, one Washington-area bride—who asked that her name not be used to avoid mortifying her in-laws—may have pushed the envelope, literally. Around week 49 of her own one-year deadline, she sought help acknowledging 15 gifts from people on the bridegroom's side who didn't know the bride—much less her handwriting. Because the notes "would never get done" if left to the groom, she composed three sample texts and made a list of people and the gifts they gave to the Mr. and Mrs. In return for a burrito lunch, a friend with lovely penmanship rescued the not-so-newlywed. Dear Total Stranger, Thank you for the beautiful fondue pot.



# When wrapping gifts, remember: presentation matters

By ANNIE LINSKEY  
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Whether you purchased perfect holiday gifts months ago or you are palming off household bric-a-brac as presents this year, keep this in mind: the way the item is wrapped matters.

In fact, the cheaper the item, the more important it is to show that time and care was considered with the packaging.

“When you give a gift, it is more than handing something to someone and saying ‘I spent money on you,’” says Melanie Nerenberg, marketing director at Kate’s Paperie, a New York-based paper boutique.

“The fact is that the gift is diminished if the wrapping is lacking. You haven’t really given something if you haven’t seen it all the way through.”

But how does one achieve the proper amount of style? We solicited suggestions from Jodi Ceglia of Ellicott City, Md., founder of Wit and Whimsey Designs, a Web-based wrapping paper design company, and Ellen Timberlake-Volz, who estimates that she wrapped roughly

22,000 gifts when she owned a store in Arlington, Texas that was dedicated to wrapped gifts. Both are past winners of 3M’s Most Gifted Wrapper contest.

□ Find beautiful paper. Master gift wrappers will be able to turn butcher’s paper into a splendid creation. But, for the rest of us, stunning, handmade paper does the trick nicely. Look in local art stores, use scrapbook paper or order paper online.

□ Tie a nice bow. For those of us who can hardly tie our shoes, the experts suggest wire-edged ribbon. Even the clumsy can make a fluffy cascading bow out of this stuff. Raffia is also pretty, but it can be tricky.

□ Accessorize. Dress up the bow with surprising accouter-

ments. Examples include pine cones, partially inflated balloons, fake fur and even live flowers. Use accessories to hint at the contents of the package; for example, tie a pair of wooden spoons to a kitchen-related gift, or stick a plastic rattle on the outside of a baby gift. These extra trinkets can be found anywhere from the Dollar Store to Pier 1.

□ Create a surprise. Even if you use the wrapping to hint at the contents of a package, wrapping is still about anticipation. Disguise a wine bottle with more than a gift sack — put it in a flat box stuffed with tissue paper. Timberlake-Volz famously created a giant aluminum candy cane as wrapping for a set of golf clubs. She shops for wrapping ideas at Home Depot—particularly for large items.

□ Recycle. “Re-gifting” is a no-no, but re-gift-wrapping is a different story. Even if the actual paper is too crinkled to reuse, it is fine to snag the ribbon and bow or reuse a fabulous gift bag with fresh tissue paper.

□ Get organized. A gift wrapping kit should include a pair of sharp scissors, double-sided tape, a glue gun and a long piece of string in addition to the paper and bows. The string is a helpful way to measure the size of the package so that you can cut paper to the correct size the first time. Start wrapping only after you have gathered all of the tools and have a clean, firm surface for your work.

□ Be happy. Be in a good mood when you get ready to wrap. Prepare a cup of tea. Savor it. Put on some music. Those who attempt to pull a gift together 10 minutes before leaving the house will be sloppier and more disorganized. This shows.

□ Create crisp corners. The trick to clean corners is cutting the paper to the correct size.



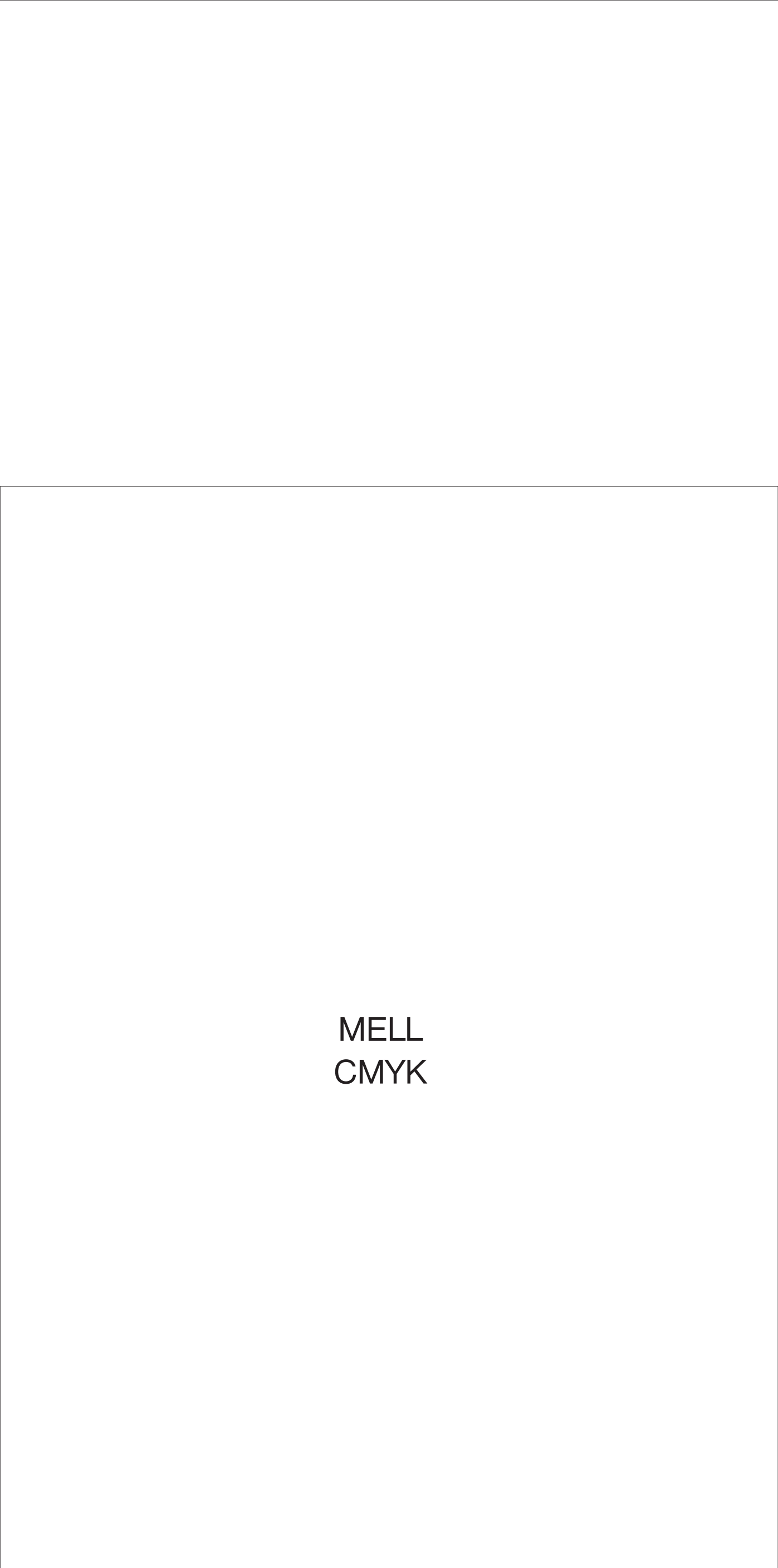
This way excess paper won’t get in the way of a clean line when the sides are folded down.

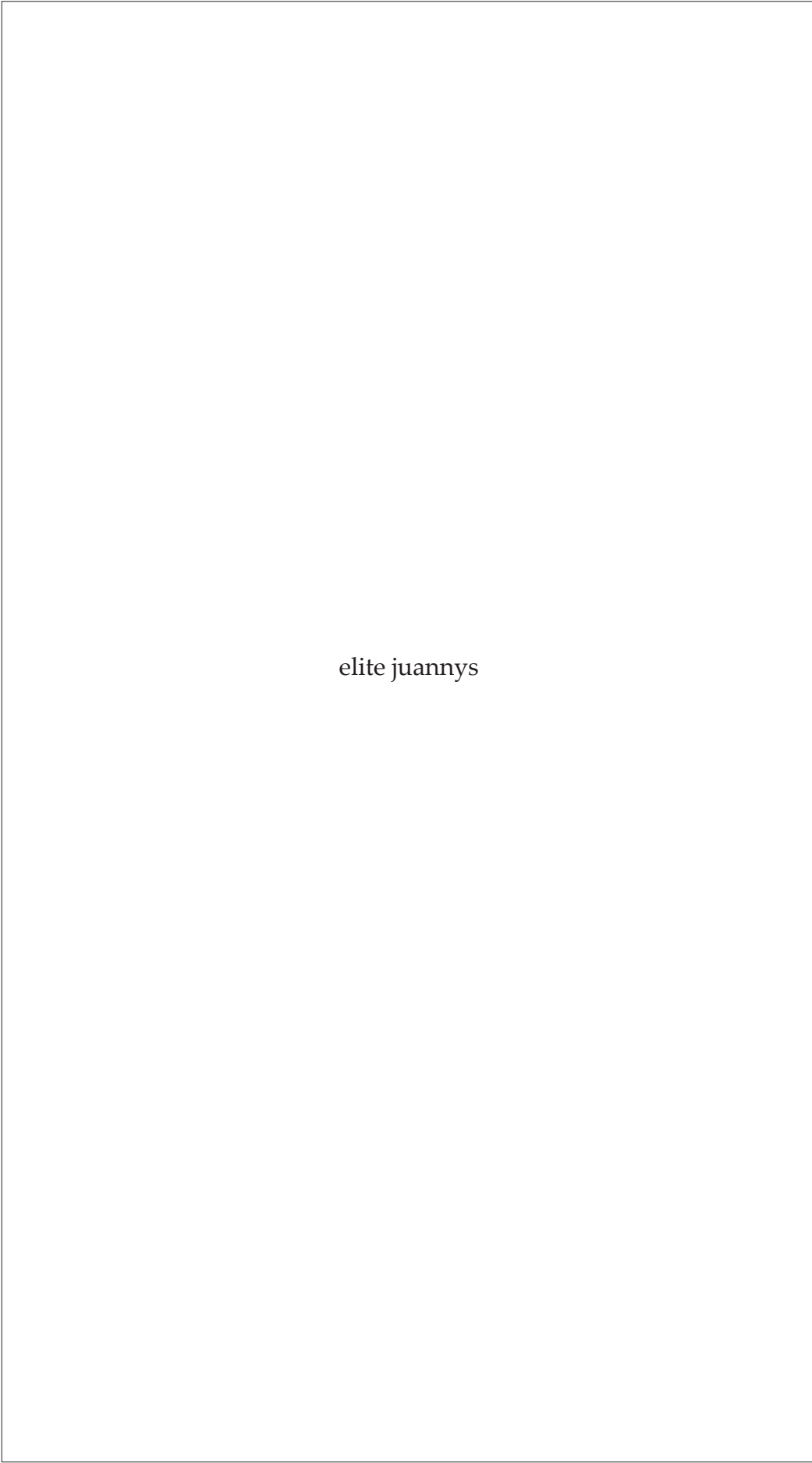
□ Tape paper to the box. Do this for each fold. This way, the paper can be pulled tight and the package will look

crisp and starched.

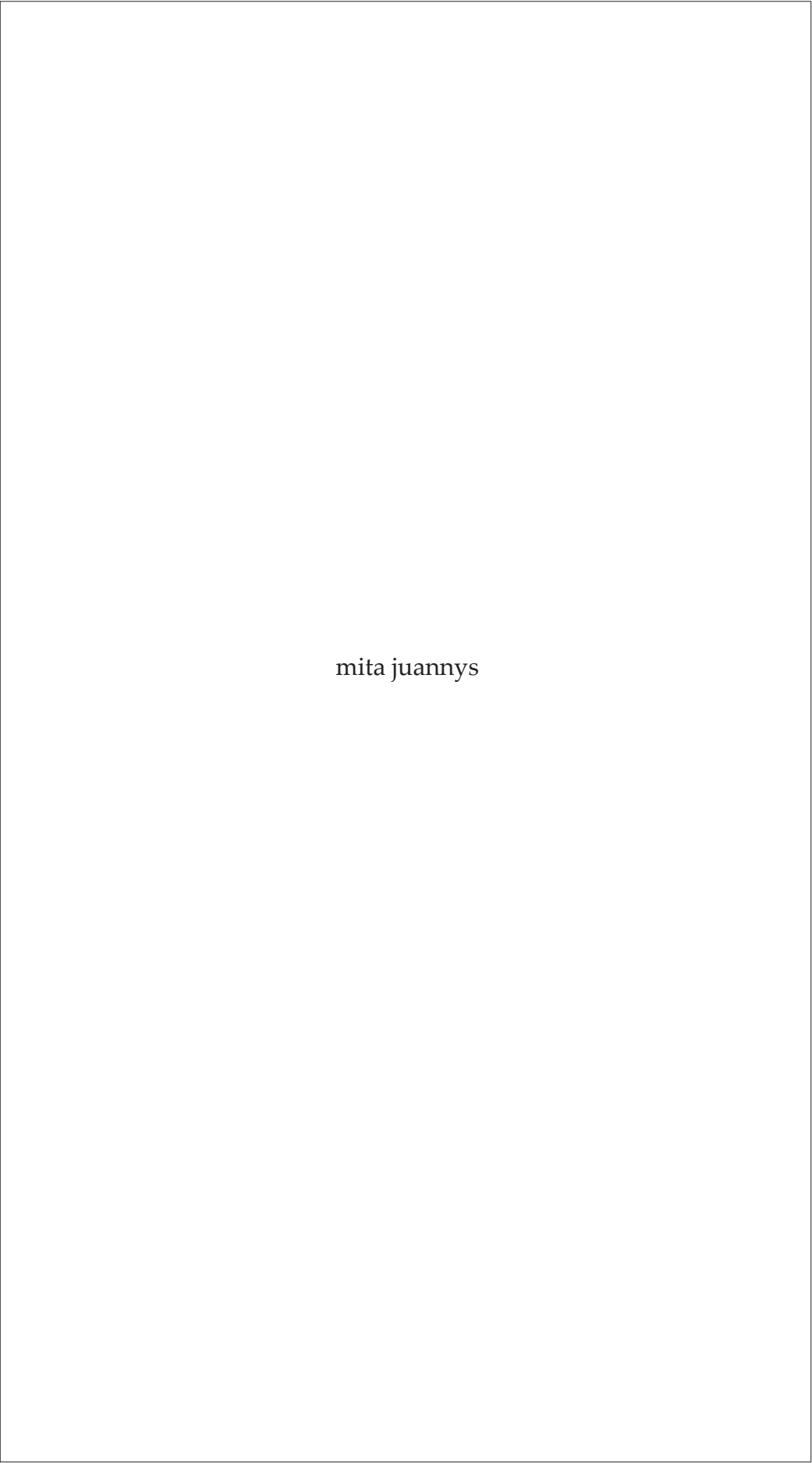
□ Plan ahead for next year. Stores put wrapping paper on sale after the holiday season. This won’t help much for Christmas 2004 ... but there is always next year.

athletes foot





elite juannys



mita juannys

# On the trail of a movie mystery

Why do some movies never make it to Saipan, and why is the popcorn so darn expensive? By JOE WEINDL, Special to the Saipan Tribune

Any movie buff on Saipan can attest to the same frustration—for weeks, you're shown previews for a movie that looks really good to you. You eagerly await its opening, only to find out that our theater won't be showing that particular flick. What?! How could our theater pass on a movie that looks so good? And if they don't plan on showing it, why do they tease us by showing the previews for it?



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The author poses with his popcorn at the Hollywood Theatres in San Jose, Saipan. Behind him is Hollywood Theatres employee Romy Legaspi.

It's understandable how, without much knowledge, many people find the theater management to be an easy target for blame. If they bring in a stinker like *After the Sunset*, but pass on a movie with widespread critical acclaim, like *Ray*, they must be insane, right? *Wrong*. Truth is there really is nobody to blame. Simply put, the reason we miss the occasional major movie is the fact that we live on a small rock in the middle of a big ocean. Of course I plan to give a few more details than that, but more importantly, we can explore some information that might help us predict which movies might or might not make it here, in the future.

In order to understand what's going on, it's necessary to know a little bit about movie distribution. After a movie is made, its distributor decides how many copies to print. Every print costs a couple thousand dollars, so they only print as many copies as they think they can get a return on. A movie with wide appeal, like *Spiderman 2*, will get around 4,000 prints, while a movie with less potential, like *Vanity Fair*, might get maybe 1,000 prints or less.

Theaters and theater chains then negotiate with the dis-

tributors to secure a lease for the film. The vast majority of the money that comes in from box office receipts goes straight to the distributor, with the theater keeping barely enough to cover operating expenses. This explains, by the way, why the food is sometimes more expensive than admission—without the concession stand, the theater wouldn't even be able to stay afloat.

Since there are a limited number of prints, the distributor has to decide which theaters to send a print to, and which theaters to snub. This might come as a huge shock, but believe it or not, Saipan is not a particularly large or profitable market. If a distributor has to decide between sending their movie to Saipan or a large city, you can guess where they think they'll turn a larger profit.

With that in mind, it's easy to see why some movies don't make it here. More often than not, it's probably the distributor who's rebuffed our theater, rather than the other way around. Rudi Marshall, general manager of Hollywood Theater, and Marlene Peters, of Wallace Theaters (Hollywood Theater parent company) both assured me that it's in their

best interest to bring *all* major releases to Saipan, so that's something that they want to do, but are sometimes turned down by the distributor.

Okay, so how do we use this information to keep from having our hopes let down in the future? We need to pay attention to a few magic numbers, and what time of year it is. At Peters' suggestion, I looked for a correlation between the number of prints a movie has and whether or not it makes it here. Indeed, there is such a correlation, with seasonal variations.

Through all of 2004, the number of major films we missed out on ranges from three to 30, depending on how we choose to define "major." For purposes of this article, I'm going use 2,000 prints as a benchmark for a "major" movie, and by that standard, we missed a total 15 movies this year.

Here's the key statistic to look at: During the slow months (January-April, September and October), we missed 12 movies, while only missing three in the busy months (summertime and holiday season). This makes perfect sense. During the busy seasons, our theater is relatively busy, and thus turning a nice profit for the distributors, while

in the slow months, our theater is pretty much empty, making it less likely that a distributor will send their movie our way.

There are many websites that list how many prints a movie will have, the best of which is [www.boxofficemojo.com](http://www.boxofficemojo.com). You can use this information to gauge the probability of a movie making it here. Let me give you the magic numbers to pay attention to.

During May, June, July, August, November, and December, if a movie has 2,000 prints or more, it's almost assured to make it here. A movie with between 1,500-2,000 prints could potentially make it here, but probably won't. You'll have to wait until it's on DVD for most anything with less than 1,500 prints.

The rest of the year is a little less predictable. If a movie has 3,000 prints or more, we're getting it. We'll probably get one with 2,700-3,000 prints, but it's not assured. It's a crapshoot with any movie between 2,000-2,700 prints—maybe we'll get it, maybe we won't. Anything less than 2,000 is extremely doubtful.

By the way, they're not actually teasing us by showing previews for movies that won't make it here. Previews come attached to a movie, so the theater has no control over what previews they show.

At the end of all this talk, it might benefit us to try and keep things in perspective. Long-time residents of Saipan can remember the theater we used to endure. That old theater was quaint, in a really wretched and uncomfortable way. Hollywood Theater, by contrast, stacks up quite nicely when compared to multiplexes in the States. While it might not compare in quality (screen size, surround sound) to the best of the best theaters, it is certainly as good as the average neighborhood multiplex in any suburb, and much better than most theaters in small towns (and Saipan is a small town). I know this sounds a little like an advertisement, and I wish I could say that I'm being compensated with free popcorn or something like that, but I'm not; this is just the simple truth—we've got it good.

WALLACE

## James Brown undergoes successful surgery

ATLANTA(AP)—James Brown underwent successful surgery Wednesday to treat his recently diagnosed prostate cancer.

"Mr. Brown has successfully undergone a localized prostate cancer procedure and is resting comfortably," Dr. James Bennett, his urologist, said in a statement. "We expect a full recovery. With proper follow-up and care, we can also expect a full cure."

The 71-year-old "Godfa-

ther of Soul" was released Wednesday afternoon from the Midtown Urology Surgical Center in Atlanta.

As he walked out of the clinic to his limousine, Brown was wearing sunglasses, a hat and a big smile.

"I feel good," Brown told reporters outside, playing off the title of one of his most popular songs.

"Mr. Brown has always been a fighter and we are confident

that he will be back on the good foot soon for another 50 years," said "SuperFrank" Copsidas, Brown's manager.

Brown, best known for hits such as "Please, Please, Please" and "Cold Sweat," announced his diagnosis late last week. Dubbed the "hardest working man in show business," he just finished a two-week Canadian tour. He is expected to spend three weeks recovering from the procedure.

Before the operation, Brown said, "I have overcome a lot of things in my life. I will overcome this as well."

Earlier this year, he faced other troubles when he was charged with domestic abuse after an altercation with his wife. The allegation was resolved when he failed to contest the charge.

Brown is due to release an autobiography next month and is planning a tour of Asia and Australia early next year.





## Kournikova, Iglesias wed in Mexico

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Is the knot really tied this time? Anna Kournikova and Enrique Iglesias were married in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, a few weeks ago, *Us Weekly* magazine reports.

"Everything is awesome. We are married," the magazine quotes Kournikova as saying at a charity tennis event in Florida Sunday.

Ivy Mollenkamp, Kournikova's publicist, refused Tuesday to confirm or deny the *Us Weekly* story, saying, "We never comment on her personal life." Iglesias' representative, Stacy Boniello, also had no comment.

Court officials in charge of registering marriages in Puerto Vallarta and neighboring Nuevo Vallarta said they had no record of such a wedding. But the former tennis pro and the Latin pop star could have had a religious wedding, which would not be legally recognized in Mexico.

Kournikova, 23, is no stranger to wedding drama. There have been numerous reports in the past few months that she and Iglesias, 29, were already married. And she was briefly married to Russian hockey player Sergei Fedorov in 2001, though at the time she denied it.



Pop vocalist Enrique Iglesias arrives with tennis star Anna Kournikova for the MTV Video Music Awards at New York's Radio City Music Hall on Aug. 29, 2002.

## Tyler gives birth to son

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Steven Tyler is now, gasp, a grandfather. Liv Tyler, daughter of the Aerosmith lead singer and model Bebe Buell, gave birth to a son in Manhattan Tuesday, *Us Weekly* magazine reported.

"They are both doing great," Tyler's publicist, Stephen Huvane, told *The Associated Press* Wednesday. He said the baby hadn't yet been named.

The 27-year-old actress is married to Royston Langdon of the band Spacehog. The two tied the knot in March 2003.

Tyler played the elf princess Arwen in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy. Her screen credits also include "Jersey Girl" and "Armageddon."

## Autopsy: Rapper O.D.B. overdosed on drugs

**NEW YORK (AP)**—The death of rapper O.D.B. was deemed an accident by the medical examiner, who said Wednesday that he died from the combined effects of cocaine and a prescription painkiller.

O.D.B., whose legal name was Russell Jones, died at a Manhattan recording studio Nov. 13.

He died "as a result of intoxication by the combined effects of cocaine and Tramadol, a prescription painkiller but not a narcotic," said Ellen Borakove, a spokeswoman for the New York City medical examiner's office.

"The manner of death is an accident," she added.

O.D.B. complained of chest pains before collapsing at the studio, and was dead by the time paramedics reached him. He was just days short of his 36th birthday.

O.D.B., also known as Ol' Dirty Bastard, was a founding member of the rap group the Wu-Tang Clan.

With his unorthodox delivery—alternately slurred, hyper and nonsensical—O.D.B. stood out even in the nine-man Clan, and as a solo artist he released hit singles such as "Shimmy Shimmy Ya" and "Got Your Money."

He had been working on his comeback album for more than a year and was almost finished.

O.D.B. was the latest in a string of rappers to meet an untimely death, among them Jam Master Jay of Run DMC, who was fatally shot in late 2002, and Notorious B.I.G. and Tupac Shakur, who were both shot to death in the late 1990s. Those killings remain unsolved.

## Naked Pamela Anderson may grace billboards



This image provided by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA, is an advertisement entitled "Give Fur the Cold Shoulder" for an anti-fur campaign showing Pamela Anderson topless.

**BEIJING (AP)**—A naked Pamela Anderson will beckon from Chinese billboards in a new anti-fur campaign—if the former "Baywatch" star can get past the censors.

The posters, featuring the slogan "Give fur the cold shoulder" in English, show the 37-year-old actress topless with her back to the camera and an arm partly hiding her right breast.

An image of falling snow appears above Chinese characters reading "cold shoulders are nothing compared to the pain they feel" and "please don't wear fur."

China's straight-laced media regulators have yet to give the posters a green light, said Jason Baker, a Hong Kong-based spokesman for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, which is promoting the anti-fur campaign.

"Depending on the censors, they may be concerned about it, but it's very tastefully done," Baker said. "We may end up having to crop (the photo) a bit."

China was the origin of 40 percent of all American fur imports in 2000, according to PETA.

"I'm perfectly happy to bare my skin if it will help save animals' skins," Anderson said in a statement.

## Boyfriend of Eastwood's daughter dies

**VAIL, Colo. (AP)**—A snowboarder found dead at Vail Ski Resort was the boyfriend of Clint Eastwood's daughter, authorities said Wednesday.

Michael Combs, 42, was found late Tuesday morning in trees near the bottom of Vail Mountain, Eagle County sheriff's spokeswoman Kim Andree said. He was reported

missing Monday night.

Combs, of Calabasas, Calif., had been snowboarding with Alison Eastwood, the actor/director's daughter, Andree said. Ski patrol members and crews that groom the slopes at night had been looking for him.

Eastwood's daughter told a sheriff's deputy that Combs had

complained earlier Monday that he wasn't feeling well and had a headache.

The cause of death had not been determined. An autopsy report was expected Thursday.

Clint Eastwood was not at the resort, Andree said. His Los Angeles office released a statement saying the family was shocked and saddened by the accident.

## Friends and family urge man to haul his fiancée to court

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

**DEAR ABBY:** My fiancée, "Monique," has put me into financial ruin. It's all because of this girl she has been hanging around with, "Tracy." Monique's friends have warned her to stay away from Tracy because she's bad news.

Abby, the two of them have been kiting money. Monique has also forged my name on my own checks, and sold my personal items—things left to me by my grandparents. For years, people have urged me to press charges.

Monique and I have two children, 3 and 2. I spoke to a lawyer and I will have no problem getting full custody. Monique is on one year's probation and has to pay restitution because she stole from her employer. She is American; we live in Canada. With all the stuff that's happening, Monique may have to leave the country.

Monique's parents have told me I should press charges. She has abandoned our kids while I was at work. Children's Aid got involved, and I didn't know the kids had been taken from us until I got home from work. Luckily, we got them back.

Monique wasn't like this until she met Tracy. Should I press charges, or should I just say goodbye, take the kids and go my way? A mutual friend says Monique told her that if I do that, she will forget the kids, and find a new guy and have kids with him.

STRESSED OUT IN CANADA

**DEAR STRESSED OUT:** I'm glad you wrote and I'm pleased to help end your ambivalence. Listen to your common sense as well as to what Monique's parents are urging you to do. Protect yourself and the kids. Press charges. Tracy is not responsible for your fiancée's behavior. Your fiancée appears to have no conscience. Jail time won't help her mend her ways, but it will slow her down and make it more difficult for her to take advantage of her next victim.

**DEAR ABBY:** Last week, we invited a couple for dinner this week. Two days before the party, I called to confirm the time and they said they'd be here.

On the evening of the dinner, they showed up two hours late without even a phone call. They said the husband had to work late. Neither of them offered an apology. We had tried twice to contact them before we finally decided to go ahead and eat. They seemed offended that we did.

Were we wrong to assume they weren't coming? If you haven't heard otherwise, how long should you wait for guests before eating without them?

TIRED TO WAITING IN VIRGINIA

**DEAR TIRED OF WAITING:** You were not wrong to assume that your guests were no-shows and to have eaten dinner. That they failed to call and inform you that they had been delayed was rude. Thirty minutes is long enough to wait for tardy guests—or less if there's danger the meal will be overcooked.

**DEAR ABBY:** My beautiful wife, "Doreen," turned 41 a couple of months ago. Since then she has had extra piercings in her ears and has taken to wearing thumb rings, toe rings and ankle bracelets. Yesterday she pierced her navel. I am embarrassed for her. We have a 13-year-old daughter who is also embarrassed for her. How do I tell Doreen she looks silly?

NOT SO HIP IN CALIFORNIA

**DEAR NOT SO HIP:** Your wife's fetish brings new meaning to the term "heavy metal." It shouldn't be necessary to give her a lecture. Just walk in carrying a powerful magnet. That should send a message.

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

*Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)*



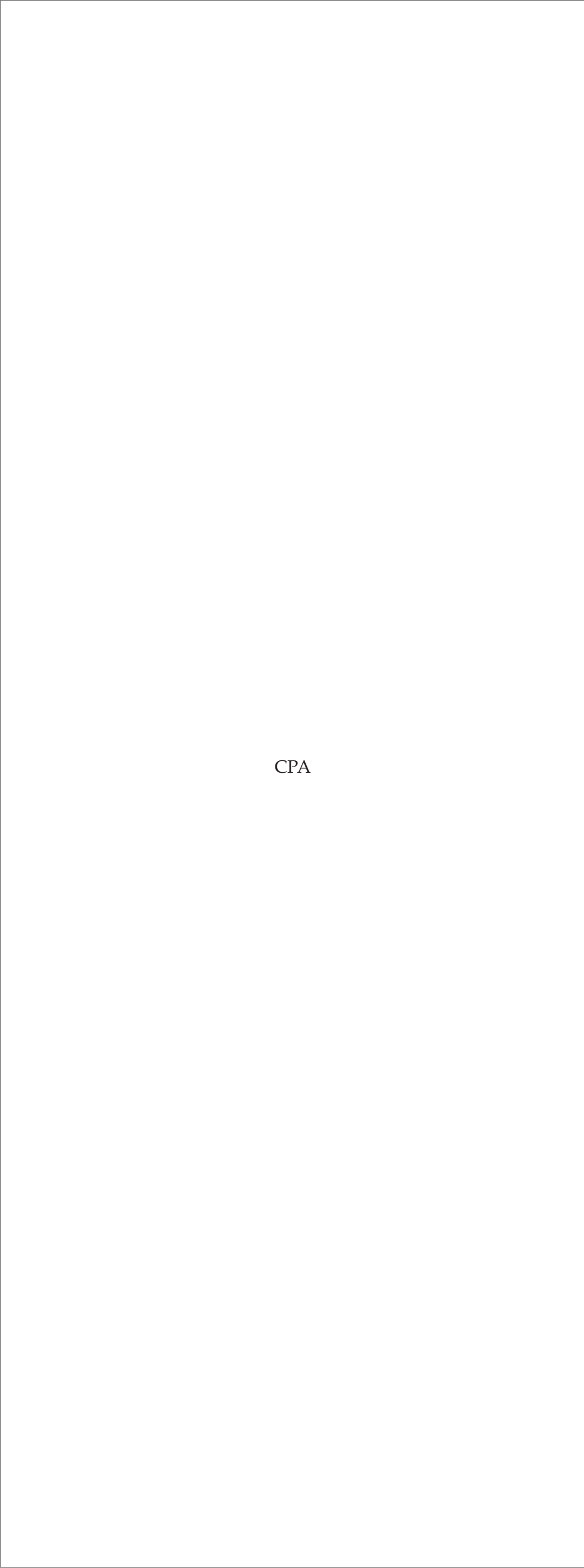
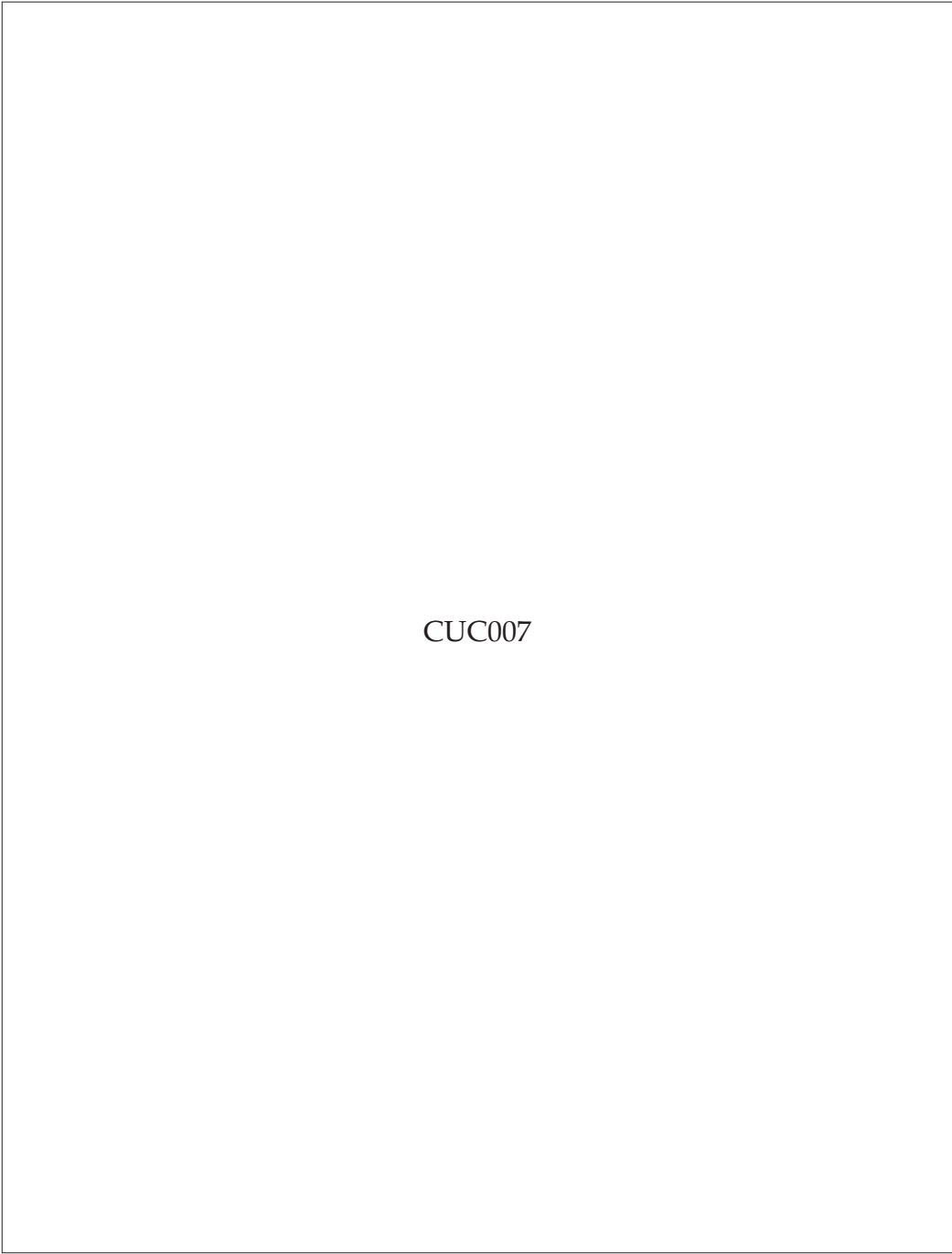
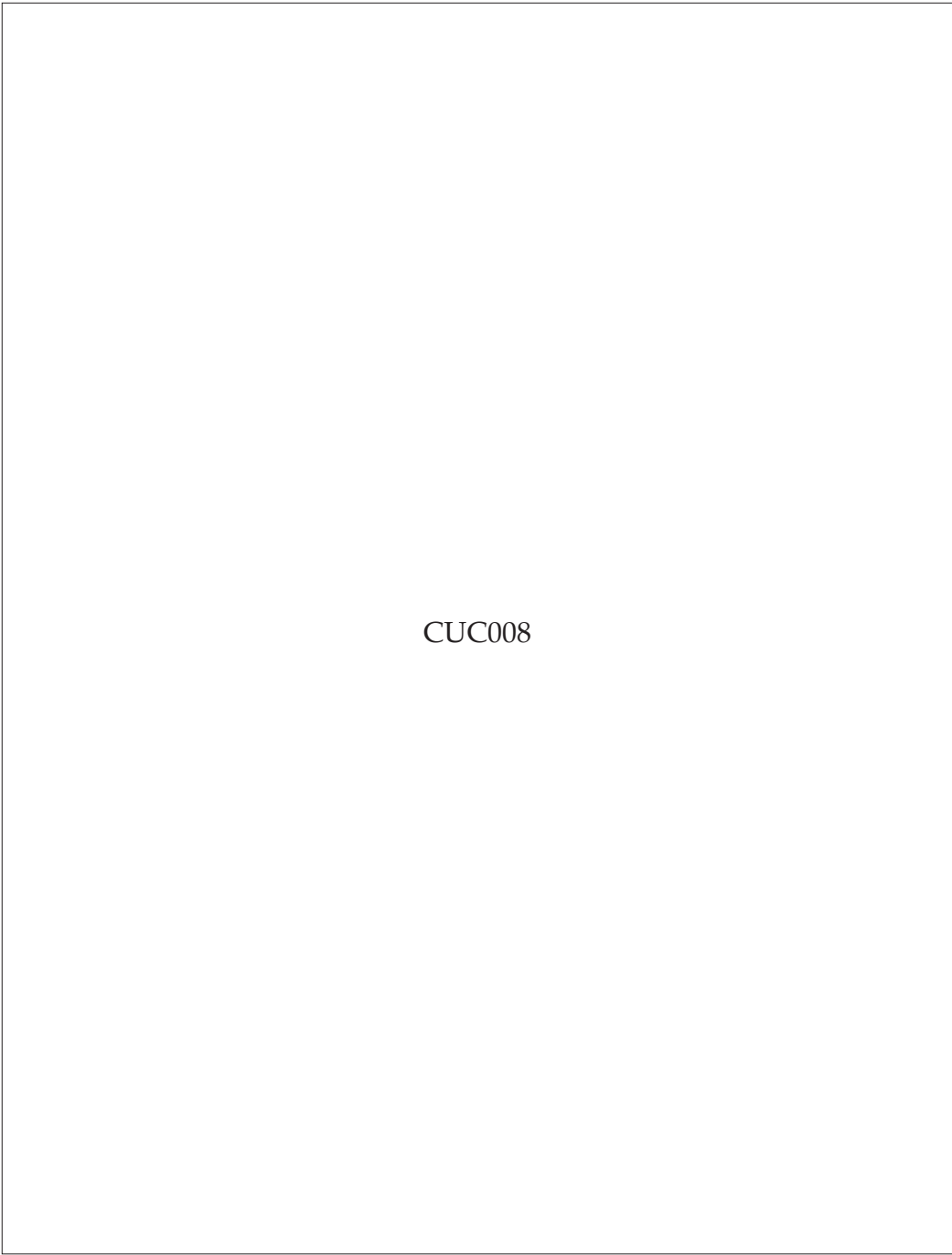
















TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

HOUSTON ASTROS-Fired Jimmy Williams, manager; Burt Hooton, pitching coach; and Harry Spilman, hitting coach. Named Phil Garner manager, Jim Hickey pitching coach, and Gary Gaetti hitting coach.

NBA

ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Jason Collier.  
BOSTON CELTICS-Re-signed C Mark Blount to a six-year contract.  
CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Signed G Jason Hart and F Tamar Slay.  
DALLAS MAVERICKS-Re-signed G Marquis Daniels to a five-year contract with a team option.  
DETROIT PISTONS-Signed F Antonio McDyess to a four-year contract with a team option and G-F Carlos Delfino to a three-year contract with a team option.  
GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS-Re-signed C Adonal Foyle to a six-year contract.  
LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Traded F-C Melvin Ely and G Eddie House to Charlotte for 2005 and 2006 second-round draft picks.  
LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Traded C Shaquille O'Neal to Miami for F Lamar Odom, F Caron Butler, F-C Brian Grant and a future first-round draft pick.  
MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES-Signed F Brian Cardinal to a six-year contract.  
MILWAUKEE BUCKS-Signed C Etan Thomas to a six-year offer sheet.  
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Brian Skinner to a multiyear contract.  
PHOENIX SUNS-Signed G Quentin Richardson to a six-year offer sheet. Signed G Steve Nash to a six-yr contract.  
SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Re-signed F Bruce Bowen. Signed G Beno Udrih.  
TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed G Rafer Alston to a five-year contract.  
UTAH JAZZ-Signed F Carlos Boozer and C Mehmet Okur to six-year offer sheets. Re-signed G Carlos Arroyo to a four-year contract.

NFL

GREEN BAY PACKERS-Voided the trade of DE Jamal Reynolds to Indianapolis after Reynolds failed his physical and waived him.  
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS-Released S Jason Perry.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES-Signed G Adrien Clarke to a four-year contract and LB Jeremiah Trotter to a one-year contract.

Olympics

U.S. OLYMPIC MEN'S ROAD CYCLING TEAM-Announced Levi Leipheimer will replace Lance Armstrong.

College

AUBURN-Named Casey Dunn assistant baseball coach.  
DARTMOUTH-Named Maribel Sanchez Souther women's cross country coach.  
EVERGREEN STATE-Named Kim Farnsworth athletic trainer.  
HOUSTON-Named John Severance women's tennis coach.  
N.J. CITY-Named Bridgette Quimpo softball coach.  
NORTH DAKOTA STATE-Named Eric Viney women's assistant volleyball coach.  
NORTHWESTERN-Announced men's junior basketball F Bernard Cote will transfer from Kentucky.  
OKLAHOMA-Named Bill Pink director of women's basketball operations.  
PALM BEACH ATLANTIC-Announced the resignation of Chris Bizol, men's and women's tennis coach, to take a position with Texas-Tyler.  
RHODE ISLAND-Announced the resignation of Boe Pearman, women's basketball coach.  
SANTA CLARA-Named M. Felipe Montoro assistant cross country coach and Steve Drake women's assistant basketball coach.  
SETON HALL-Named Gerson Echeverry men's assistant soccer coach.  
SKIDMORE-Named Darren Bennett women's basketball coach.  
ST. FRANCIS, PA.-Named Wylie Crisanti women's lacrosse coach.  
TULSA-Named Christy Connoyer softball coach.  
WRIGHT STATE-Named Rob Cooper baseball coach.

By The Associated Press

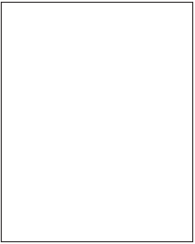
LOCAL SCORES

RESTAURANT LEAGUE STANDINGS

Angel Wings	3	0
Country House	3	1
Jollibee	3	1
Capricciosa	2	1
Keeraku	1	2
LSG Sky Chefs	0	3
El Segundo	0	4







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# Sports

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